

2015

Learning in a pre-service teacher residency program

Shuyi Zhen
Edith Cowan University

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Learning in a pre-service teacher residency program

This thesis is presented for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Shuyi Zhen

Edith Cowan University

Faculty of Education and Arts

School of Education

2015

Abstract

Teacher educators worldwide are seeking ways to develop stronger links with schools, to improve the quality of initial teacher preparation. In this study the researcher investigated a residency approach to initial teacher education (ITE) in a one-year Graduate Diploma of Education course designed to prepare primary school teachers at a university in Western Australia. A mixed methods inquiry approach was employed to examine the nature and quality of the professional learning experiences of the pre-service teacher participants.

The Teacher Residency Program (TRP) was based on a medical residency model, with residents given a semester-length placement in two schools. Each placement provided a continuous two-day per week placement and concluded with a five-week fulltime block teaching experience. University course work complemented the in-school practical experience during each of the placement periods. The researcher used concurrent nested research design with quantitative data embedded in the qualitative data to explore the professional learning of the residents; Specifically, the researcher sought evidence of perspective transformation in the residents' learning process, and a determination of how particular elements of the TRP supported or hindered residents' professional development.

The findings indicate that the residents perceived their professional learning as one of continuous growth. The data confirm that the TRP provided a professionally oriented study of teaching that provided time and opportunity for cumulative learning from both course work and practical teaching. Through the lens of a transformative learning paradigm, the study found that individual development in the TRP varies considerably. Further the residents experienced perspective transformation relating to a range of aspects about learning to teach. The process of transforming perspectives about teaching and learning was multidimensional, individualistic and contextually dependent. Elements of the TRP that assisted residents' professional development were the concurrent university course work integrated with extended clinical school placement; the opportunities for continuous two-day per week school placement; the block practicum and the two different school placement learning experiences. Aspects that appeared to hinder residents' professional development were related to the quantity and quality of the university

course work offered; the discrepancies that the residents experienced between what they studied about teaching and what they experienced in schools; differences between mentor teachers, and the length of the course. The findings of this study have implications relevant to other ITE programs for improving the learning outcomes of pre-service teachers.

The declaration page
is not included in this version of the thesis

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Acronyms and Abbreviation

AC	Alternative Certification
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
AUSL	Academy for Urban School Leadership
BTR	Boston Teacher Residency
CAEP	Council for Accreditation of Education Provider
MGSE	Melbourne Graduate School of Education
NCATE	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
PK	Professional Knowledge
PP	Professional Practice
PE	Professional Engagement
TEMAG	Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group
TQNP	Teacher Quality National Partnership
TRBWA	Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia
TRP	Teacher Residency Program
WACOT	Western Australian College of Teaching

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

This study investigates the learning experiences of a class of graduate pre-service teachers, who progressed through a one-year Graduate Diploma of Education, which was offered in a school residency mode by an Australian university. The program was designed to respond to growing concerns about the quality of learning provided for teacher preparation by most initial teacher education (ITE) programs. The issue of the quality of teaching and teacher education has become a political matter. Many governments worldwide have focused on improving ITE to improve teacher quality to build workforce capacity, economic competitiveness, and to respond to rising social expectations (Cochran-Smith, 2012).

In Australia, teacher education has ranked highly on the political agenda for over fifty years. Federal and state governments have commissioned over 101 reviews of teacher education since the 1970s, with 40 reports being published on various aspects of teacher education in the past ten years alone (Louden, 2008; Mayer, 2014). These reviews have reflected a broad national agenda to improve the quality of school learning, in order to improve the social and economic outcomes of all Australian citizens, particularly those from low socioeconomic communities. Researchers linking teacher quality to student learning outcomes (Hattie, 2003) have placed a stronger emphasis on the quality of each individual classroom teacher, and consequently on the quality of each pre-service teacher. Author of meta-analyses demonstrating the impact of the classroom teacher on student learning (Hattie, 2008) have, for example, raised expectations for all students to be taught by a quality teacher. This in turn has raised expectations for each graduating teacher to be of high quality.

In keeping with these expectations the Australian Federal Minister for Education in the Abbot Government launched another review of teacher education in the first months of 2014. This review, which was implemented by a special Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (The Advisory Group), was designed to report on aspects of ITE concerning pedagogy, discipline subject knowledge for teaching, and how professional experience prepares pre-service teachers to use

theory to inform their practice. The report titled *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014) was released to the public in February 2015 during the final stage of the current thesis's preparation for submission. It is likely that the findings of this review will have far reaching consequences for the future policy directions of ITE in Australia, particularly for the quality of practice experience and mentoring that is provide for pre-service teachers.

The curriculum and pedagogy underpinning ITE programs have, therefore, become a contested domain. Researchers have reported on the quality and selection of applicants, the nature and length of the course of study, and the associated professional experience in schools. Yet, there is little consensus regarding what beginning teachers really need to know, what they should be able to do, or whether or how various approaches to teacher education make a difference (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2010). Consequently, there is little consensus regarding the curriculum and pedagogy in ITE, or indeed how long the program should run. In that regard, programs may be offered at both undergraduate or postgraduate level, they may include relatively few or extensive in-school experiences, and they may vary from less than a year in length to five years or more (Scannell, 1999). To date, research evidences link quality of program to quality of graduating teacher remains scant (Mayer, 2014).

Traditional university-based ITE programs that include course work interspersed with periods of school teaching placements are generally regarded as inadequate preparation for pre-service teachers. For example, Loughran, Korthagen, and Russell (2013) found that on graduation beginning teachers from traditional programs did not have the skills and abilities they needed to manage the complex needs of the classrooms they had been assigned to teach. In addition, traditional ITE programs have been criticised for being 'overly theoretical' and 'fragmented' (Bullough & Gitlin, 2013), and 'unconnected to practice' (Ure, 2010). Graduates from traditionally structured programs have reported they were "overwhelmed" as beginning teachers and that they spent much of their time focused on their survival and learning how to manage their classrooms, rather than planning and monitoring student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 42). It is not surprising that the high turnover rates for beginning teachers during are linked to the inadequate preparation of ITE graduates for teaching (Zeichner, 2003) .

In Australia attempts to improve teacher professionalism and the quality of ITE over the past 15 to 20 years have been spearheaded by government instituted authorities that have been charged with the tasks of registering teachers and accrediting ITE programs. In 2010 the Australian Federal Government established the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to coordinate ITE accreditation and teacher registration at a national level. Prior to this some state authorities administered these matters independently, using state-based standards. The Australian Government agenda for this national approach to improve quality of teaching, school leadership and ITE has led to the development and implementation of a set of national standards for ITE course accreditation along with standards for the teaching profession, and school leaders.

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, introduced by AITSL in 2011, includes a set of graduate standards, which list the attributes, and skills expected of all ITE graduates (AITSL, 2014). The graduate standards and the set of associated course accreditation standards instituted in 2012 have provided a strong force for the reform of ITE. All ITE higher education providers are now required to have their programs accredited against the national standards through their state authorities. By 2017, all Australian ITE programs will be required to meet the National Australian course accreditation requirements.

The National Professional Standards provide continuity in expectations for professional development from “Graduate level”, to “Proficient”, to “Highly Accomplished” and “Lead teacher” levels (AITSL, 2014). These standards link pre-service teacher development more directly to the work of classroom teachers. The common set of learning and professional attributes that are framed by the standards apply to both pre- and in-service teachers. This commonality provides the opportunity for shared expectations and professional learning in ITE across the school/provider boundaries and for more collaborative preparation of pre-service teachers.

This study of the Teacher Residency Program (TRP), which was offered through a higher education provider in Western Australia, was designed to investigate pre-service teachers’ perceptions of their learning experiences. The TRP was designed to respond to changes in the regulatory landscape and the available research regarding best practice in ITE. The TRP was first implemented in 2010 with

support from National Partnerships Initiative funding and through the sponsorship of the WA Department of Education (Department of Education, 2011). The program was developed in close partnership between the higher education provider, the WA Department of Education, and associated schools. The curriculum and pedagogy was designed to provide a more highly integrated theoretical and practical experience of teacher preparation, and it drew upon the teacher standards that were developed by the Western Australian College of Teaching, which was in operation at the time the program was developed.

The residency component of the TRP was based on medical nomenclature to reflect the close pairing of university course work with lengthy periods of (school) placement for extended periods of ‘clinical experience’ (McDonald, 2009). The overall goals of the TRP included developing a new method of recruitment and preparation of pre-service teachers to improve both their readiness and resilience for teaching. The establishment of strong partnerships between the provider and schools provided the opportunity to include a more rigorous selection process. The partnership also allowed for integrated time on campus and in school throughout the full year of the program. This provided pre-service teachers with opportunities to practice what they had studied at university with the mentorship of an experienced teacher in an authentic classroom environment. In this way, the residency, or clinical placement, afforded opportunities for sustained integration of theory and practice. Thus the placement program ensured pre-service teachers were in contact with classrooms each week of the TRP. Some periods of contact were part-time, although considerable periods of full-time placement also occurred.

A clinical model to teacher education has been adopted to some ITE programs in Australia and elsewhere. Examples include: the Master of Teaching at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) at the University of Melbourne, Australia; the Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) and the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL) in the US, and the Oxford Internship Scheme in the UK. Regardless of the variations between these programs, all have similar core principles that are based on ensuring pre-service teachers learn within an established community of practice (Burn & Mutton, 2015) and have access to the professional and practical wisdom of experienced teachers. In this sense, ‘clinical practice’ enables inexperienced pre-service teachers to transform their thinking about

schooling through close professional engagement with more experienced teachers. This transformation is understood to include being able to understand the needs of students in the classrooms where they, themselves, are learning to teach and to generate responses that are appropriate to their needs. It is anticipated that pre-service teachers in clinical programs will be more able to develop strategies to support learners and manage classrooms more effectively. As such, the common goal for these programs is to produce quality teachers who are more able to cope with the demands of teaching, and are ready for employment.

Whereas the clinical or residency approach has gained support, there is little research to define how ‘clinical’ works in practice or which particular features of the clinical approach contribute to improving the quality of graduating teachers. In the current study the researcher seeks to understand the nature of the learning that is experienced by pre-service teachers in the TRP. In order to understand the nature of this learning, the researcher has employed the criteria for the transformational learning framework of Mezirow (1991) to analyse how, or whether, the learning experiences of the pre-service teachers in the TRP constitute a new clinical or transformative pedagogical approach for ITE.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study was designed as an inquiry into the professional learning experiences of pre-service teachers who were enrolled in a one-year graduate teacher education program, the TRP. The purpose of this study was for the Researcher to explore the nature of pre-service teachers’ overall learning experiences in the TRP, and to determine whether these experiences helped to transform their understanding about teaching. Specifically, the researcher aimed to examine graduate pre-service teachers’ perceptions about their professional learning during the course, and whether these experiences evidenced the occurrence of transformative learning. In addition, the researcher sought to examine how the various elements of the TRP impacted the professional development of the pre-service teacher participants.

In conducting the study the researcher used a concurrent nested methodology, in which one data set provided a supportive, secondary role in a study based primarily on the other data set (Creswell, 2003). Primary qualitative data were gathered by interviewing 12 pre-service teachers to provide an in-depth examination

of their process of learning to teach. The data were analysed for evidence of transformative learning, using criteria developed by Mezirow (1991). Secondary quantitative data were collected through two surveys that were administered to the full cohort of pre-service teachers. This survey data provided quantitative information about the residents' professional learning experience during their TRP. These secondary data complemented the qualitative data obtained from interviews and served as a backdrop for exploring the quality of learning to teach experiences afforded by the program.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is threefold:

- Firstly, the researcher sought to generate new knowledge about ITE, and to add to the knowledge base for understanding the process of learning to teach; add to current understanding of how clinical learning models work for ITE. Particularly, the researcher sought to provide insights into the application of transformative learning theory by examining the learning experiences of pre-service teachers and their professional development. From a theoretical point of view, the researcher also produced new methodological perspectives because little has been written about the process of becoming a teacher by embedding quantitative data within a primarily qualitative design.
- Secondly, the researcher sought to inform policies and practices regarding improving the quality of the practicum component of ITE in the context of school-based teacher education reform. White, Bloomfield and Cornu (2010, p. 182) asserted that professional experience (practicum) "...has witnessed a plethora of change over the past couple of decades and further changes are both predicted and necessary for teacher education and teacher educators faced by the swell of education reform". In the current study the researcher sought to provide evidence for the planning and implementation of effective professional learning experiences (practicum) for teacher education programs in Australia.

- Thirdly, the findings of this research are relevant to current policy debates with regards to teacher education reforms both in Australia and internationally. Pedagogical reconstruction of teacher education programs has been advocated around the world and has been regarded as an essential step in building workforces that have the capabilities for meeting the needs of schools and students in an increasingly diverse, globalised, and complex society. The findings of this study are relevant to teacher education providers, policy makers and the wider community to improve learning outcomes for pre-service teachers. The researcher provides an in-depth analysis of pre-service teacher learning in a clinical and professionally applied residency model and identifies aspects of learning for a more effective approach to teacher education.

1.4 Research Questions

To examine pre-service teachers' professional learning experiences during the TRP, the researcher addressed three core questions:

1. *What perceptions do pre-service teachers have about their professional learning experiences during the TRP?*

This question focused on the perceptions of the residents on their experiences during the residency. To answer this question, the researcher examined and collated each Resident's account of how their professional learning unfolded and how their professional identity developed.

2. *Do pre-service teachers' perceptions provide evidence of a transformative learning experience during the TRP?*

To answer this question, the researcher focused on residents' experiences in the TRP to ascertain how their experience of learning to teach impacted on their beliefs and perspectives about teaching. Criteria from Mezirow's transformative learning theory framework were used to analyse interview data collected from the residents. In addition, the researcher conducted two case studies, which demonstrated two contrasting patterns of learning to teach during the TRP. The data from these case studies were examined to further provide evidence of transformative learning.

3. *What elements of the TRP support or hinder the professional learning of pre-service teachers?*

This question was concerned with elements of the TRP that residents perceived as supportive or hindering in the process of learning to teach. Responses to this question provided insights into whether or how a clinical teacher residency approach to teacher education related to the professional development needs of the pre-service teachers.

1.5 Context of the Study

As mentioned above, the researcher conducted this study at a university in Western Australia, with a focus on the one-year-long Diploma of Education (DipEd) program offered in 2011, which was referred to as the Teacher Residency Program (TRP). In response to a changing education landscape in Australia, the TRP was developed to address the issues and constraints identified in existing graduate-level ITE programs. It was designed to provide better quality learning experiences for graduate teacher education students, referred to as residents, by immersing them in authentic and professional environment of teaching and providing them with a greater integration of theoretical studies and practical teaching experiences. The establishment of the TRP was in alignment with government initiatives for the development of training schools, fostering partnerships between systems, schools, and universities (McDonald, 2009). The TRP program was supported by \$930,000 in funding from the Australian Government Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations. The following material is positive and uncritical because it has been derived mainly from office documents of the program.

1.5.1 Core principles for the design of the TRP

The design of the TRP was underpinned by four core principles. Firstly, The TRP model provides links between theory and practice with an integrated classroom experience. Residents had opportunities each week to go to a placement school (residency school) to apply and practise knowledge, and skills they acquired through course work at the university. This allowed them to test their ideas and strategies, reflect on them and modify their practice accordingly. Secondly, the TRP respected the professional partnership between the university and schools. Both parties were engaged in a collegial and collaborative relationship for the preparation of pre-

service teacher and the professional development of practising teachers in school. Thirdly, residents provided valuable resource in assisting student learning and quality teaching. Residents had much to offer to Residency schools in terms of disciplinary knowledge, their passion for teaching and simply the amount of time they spent in the school. Lastly, residents were expected to participate actively in the professional learning community of the placement school (School of Education, 2011).

1.5.2 Key stakeholders of the university and school partnership

The school of education at the University had long-established partnerships with some schools. The TRP provided the opportunity for deeper partnerships that supported the development of a more integrated professional learning model for initial teacher education. In the TRP, the residency Schools and the university agreed to share responsibilities for preparing teachers, working collaboratively to establish a common vision for quality teacher preparation. This was achieved through regular meetings that were designed to cultivate a shared understanding of the TRP, its requirements and factors contributing to the success of the residents. It was anticipated that the closer cooperation between residency schools and the university would provide a forum for examining theory and practice in teacher education. The partnership model, with the key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the TRP, are presented in Figure 1.1

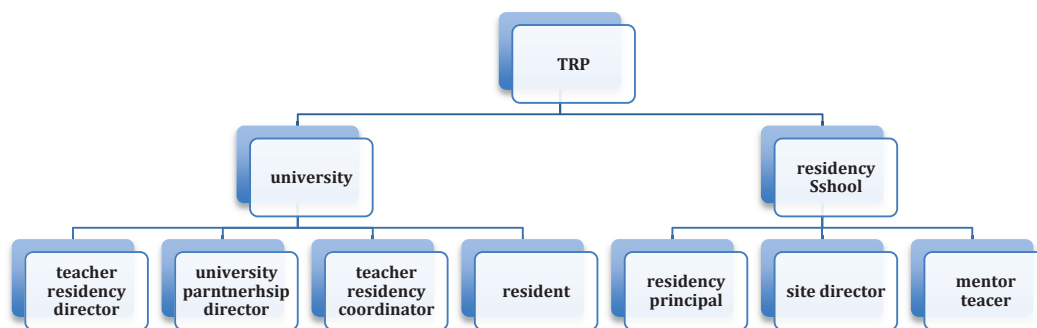


Figure 1.1: Key stakeholders of the TRP

A teacher residency director was appointed by the university to oversee and manage all aspects of the program including, resident recruitment, monitoring the academic progress of residents, researching, evaluating, reporting on the TRP project, and facilitating professional network for stakeholder participants. The

partnership director was put in charge of coordinating and managing the university and residency schools relationships. The university also nominated a teacher residency coordinator for each stream of the program: early childhood, primary and secondary. These coordinators oversaw and organised all aspects of the theoretical course work at university. They also liaised with the site directors, mentor teachers and residents in schools and provided assistance for resolving issues where needed. Residents were expected to be professional and collegial in their relationship with the other stakeholders of the TRP, and to maintain a high level of commitment to their responsibilities at both the university and school. They worked collaboratively with their mentor teachers, gradually assuming increased responsibilities for full-time teaching as the year progressed.

Principals of the participating schools supported the TRP, mainly through their administrative responsibilities. For example, they appointed a competent member of the teaching staff as site director and selected staff to be a mentor teacher. They also participated in the induction of the residents to their school. Site directors held a central role in coordinating and supporting the school residency. They were required to provide the critical link between the school and the university, to support and provide feedback to both mentor teachers and residents, and to provide assistance for resolving problems if required. Mentor teachers had the crucial and complex role of supporting the professional growth of the residents. Mentor teachers were expected to provide practical teaching support for the residents through modelling, coaching and other feedback. They were expected to engage in weekly conversations with residents to facilitate the residents' critical reflection on their understanding and practice of teaching.

1.5.3 The implementation of the TRP

1.5.3.1 Resident recruitment

The TRP included a rigorous approach to resident recruitment to ensure that only candidates demonstrating the attributes of prospective teachers were accepted into the TRP. The selection process was designed to profile candidate with regard to her/his adaptability to the professional environment of schools, and potential to draw on her/his experiences to be an asset to a residency school. Applications to the TRP were initially assessed according to the candidates' academic qualifications, past experiences, and motivation for becoming a teacher. Subsequently, the candidates'

performance in a half-day school-based activity and in a panel interview by school teachers and university academics was also taken into consideration. The involvement of both university and residency schools people in selecting residents ensured the development of shared understandings and ownership of the process. Candidates who appeared to display the disposition, skills and previous experiences that were predictive of successful teaching, and who were judged to be suited to the joint demands of the university and schools were selected. This approach to recruitment at the entry level of the TRP was designed to help ensure the teacher candidates were both ready to benefit from the early and extensive clinical experiences and able to make an active contribution to these schools. The selection process also enabled candidates to be viewed as active participants in their professional learning from the first day of the program.

1.5.3.2 Clinical experience and concurrent course work

The TRP was designed to give emphasis to the residents' to school-based clinical experiences in initial teacher preparation. However, the program also recognised the importance of the residents' exposure to theoretical elements of education. The integration of course work and clinical teaching practice was manifested in the binary structure of the TRP, that is, the residency and university course work components. The residency component offered ongoing weekly practical learning experiences in schools, which culminated in a full-time block placement (practicum) at the end of the two semesters of the year-long TRP. As noted previously, this extensive residency placement component also provided residents with opportunities for professionally focused learning through interaction with their mentor teachers.

The residents began the course with a two-week program of intensive course work on campus in mid-January during university semester 1. This was followed by clinical experience in the residency schools for a two-day per week placement. These days, which were referred to as “distributed days”, commenced at the start of the school term one and continued until the end of school term two when the residents undertook a five-week full-time block practicum. This clinical experience continued in a second school during school terms 3 and 4 to provide residents with experience of a different school context. While attending the schools, the residents undertook

concurrent academic studies and attended university every Friday, except during the periods when residents undertook full-time block practicum.

In addition to the clinical experience during distributed days and concurrent course work, residents were also provided with opportunities to attend themed workshops, which usually targeted a particular aspect of teaching, such as, strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. These workshops were normally facilitated by recognised specialist teachers from the residency schools or by university academics, and were delivered mainly in schools.

1.5.3.3 Mentorship and collegial support

As mentioned above, an important feature of the TRP was the active mentoring support that enabled residents to acquire knowledge of resources and materials, instructional strategies, and curriculum guidance (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007). The mentoring aspect of the school-based component was designed to avoid leaving pre-service teachers to “sink or swim”. Mentor teachers were expected to meet with the residents for a two-hour reflective discussion each week (weekly meetings) and to provide individualised support during the course of the week to meet needs as they arose.

Twice a term a three-way meeting was to be set up for the site director, mentor teacher and resident to discuss and reflect upon resident’s progress. These meetings made it possible for the site director to identify areas of concern and offer advice and feedback on strengths and achievements.

Residents were placed in residency schools in a cohort of approximately eight to ten per school. This was expected to provide a safe and non-threatening collegial environment for residents to share resources, engage in professional conversations with mentor teachers and peers about their teaching practice, and derive emotional support.

1.5.3.4 Professional practice assessment

Residents’ teaching practice was formally assessed at two points in the clinical placement program. The first assessment occurred at the end of the first four-week block placement held at the end of school term 2. The second formal assessment took place at the end of the five-week block placement in school term four. This first assessment was diagnostic and informative. The second assessment

formed the final performance reviewed for graduation and subsequent registration for teaching. Residents' performances in both placements were formally assessed by the mentor teacher in collaboration with a university supervisor assigned to the school.

1.5.3.5 Professional development for site directors and mentor teachers

Cluster meetings were held twice a year for site directors and mentor teachers from all schools to provide professional development for them about the course and their roles. This professional development was designed to create a professional learning community for all participants, and was supported through a virtual professional community site created on the university Blackboard™ learning management system.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Teacher Residency Program (TRP): a one-year graduate teacher education program (Diploma of Education), which combined an ongoing two-day per week clinical placement experience with in-school supervision and concurrent on-campus course work.

Residency/school placement: the school placement component of the TRP, in which teacher candidates were placed in school as student teachers to learn alongside an experienced teacher two days a week. Teacher candidates enrolled in the TRP undertook two school placements over one university academic year.

Residency school/ placement school: schools where teacher candidates enrolled in the TRP were placed as pre-service teachers to learn alongside an experienced teacher. Teacher candidates went to two schools for two school terms during the TRP.

School term: A block of 10 to 12 weeks of teaching in school, four terms per year, running from late January to the middle of December.

University semester: A block of two 12 to 13 weeks of teaching period in university, two semesters per year, running from late February to June, August to November.

Resident: teacher candidates who were enrolled in the TRP and pre-service teachers who were placed in schools.

Mentor teacher: experienced practicing teachers in residency schools who provided supervision to residents.

Site director: experienced practicing teachers who had central role in coordinating and supporting the development of learning community in residency schools. These teachers were responsible for providing support, feedback to both mentor teachers and residents and assisted with problems when required.

Professional learning experiences: is a general term used in this study to refer to the overall learning experience that the residents had when they were enrolled in the TRP. Within the scope of this study, it is a term not interchangeable with ‘professional experience’, which has been used in existing literature for student teaching experiences or practicum experiences.

Block placement/ block practicum: practicum of four to five weeks long, in which resident undertook independent full-time teaching in residency school classrooms.

Frame of reference: (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5) define this as the “structure of assumptions through which we understanding our experiences” and “they selectively shape and delimit expectations, perceptions, cognition and feeling”. It is seen to be composed of two dimensions: “habits of mind” and “a point of view”.

Point of view: “The constellation of belief, value judgment, attitude, and feeling that shapes a particular interpretation.” They could change “ as we reflect on either the content or process by which we solve problems and identify the need to modify assumptions” (Mezirow, 1997, p. 6).

Habits of mind: “Broad, abstract, orienting, habitual ways of thinking, feeling, and acting influenced by assumptions that constitute a set of codes”(Mezirow, 1997, p. 6). Habits of mind are durable and more resistant to change, and they become articulated in a specific point of view.

1.7 Organisation and Presentation of the Thesis

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter Two provides a review of literature on various aspects of ITE that are pertinent to the conceptualisation of this study, including Australian teacher quality reform, how teachers learn to teach, and transformative learning theory. Chapter Three addresses the methodological aspects

for this research. It begins with a description of the research design and the rationale for choosing a concurrent nested mixed methods design. In this chapter the researcher provides a description of the participants, the instruments used to collect data, and how these were organised and analysed. The researcher also includes the rationale for the four-stage transformative framework that has been used for data analysis. Chapter Three concludes with a discussion of the validity and reliability of the data and a clarification of relevant ethical issues. Chapter Four provides a detailed analysis of the interview data about the professional learning experiences of the resident cohort. Chapter Five examines 12 residents' learning-to-teach process in order to understand how their experiences impacted on their beliefs and perspectives about teaching through the lens of transformative learning theory. This chapter also depicts individual cases studies of two residents' professional learning experiences during the TRP. Guided by the four-stage transformative framework, the data are analysed to determine whether or not residents' professional learning experiences evidenced a transformative learning process during the TRP. Chapter Six presents findings of residents' perceptions of the supportive and hindering elements of the program for their professional development. Chapter seven is dedicated to the discussion of all relevant findings for each research question. Chapter eight answers research questions individually followed by the implications of policy and practice from this study. Limitations and suggestion for future research are also included.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The researcher commences this review with an overview of current research about the residency approach to pre-service teachers' professional learning. The first section of the review includes studies of traditional teacher education programs and programs that are aligned with the TRP. It explores features of teacher residency programs that have been implemented around the world, and discusses the impact of Australian teacher education reforms on the design and implementation of initial teacher education programs. This exploration of the literature is designed to clarify factors leading to the development of the particular teacher residency program being studied here, and to articulate the value of this study for informing understandings about the preparation of pre-service teachers.

The second section of the literature review is devoted to exploring the process of 'learning to teach', focusing on research about how teachers develop and what constitutes an effective learning experience for pre-service teachers.

The final section of this review examines how the model of transformative learning provides a framework for adult learning that can be applied to the study of how pre-service teachers learn to be a teacher. In this section the researcher also outlines the relevance of the model of transformative learning for this study of pre-service teacher learning in the TRP. Essential theories underpinning transformative learning that are advocated by various scholars are examined, compared, and clarified. It is in this section that the reviewer identifies gaps in current research about deep learning in pre-service teacher education.

2.2 Residency Model of Teacher Education

Whereas the TRP model was less prevailing in the Australian context, an in-school residency had been developed for many ITE programs in America. Two examples are the Chicago Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL) and the Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) programs. Considered as the two most promising residency programs in America, these programs were developed as "an innovative

response to the longstanding challenges of how to recruit, prepare and retain bright and capable teacher for high-needs urban school” (Berry, Montgomery, & Snyder, 2008, p. 1). The AUSL and BTR TRPs had a similar program design and core principles. These similarities included: the provision of teaching candidates with tight integration of theory and practice about teaching; an extended clinical in-school practical learning component alongside an experienced mentor teacher, and rich opportunities for developing professional and collegial attributes, through engagement with members of the teaching profession (Berry, Montgomery, & Snyder, 2008). The effective delivery of these elements depended on the partnership between the university and participating schools (Berry, Montgomery, Curtis, Hernandez, Wurtzel & Snyder, 2008). Although similar to the TRP in this study, the residents in these two urban teacher residencies in America were paid a stipend while learning to teach. No financial support was made available to the residents in the current study.

2.2.1 Teacher residency in the context of alternative certification

The American teacher residency programs were established as part of the Alternative Certification (AC) movement, which was developed specifically for individuals who had not completed a traditional 4-year teaching certification degree through an accredited university. Like the graduate diploma students in Australia, these candidates had normally completed a bachelor degree before undertaking this alternative licensing pathway for entry into teaching (Feistritz & Chester, 2003; Podgursky, 2004).

In America campus-based teacher education program of four or five years in length is a important pathway for entry into teaching; however, AC programs have developed rapidly over recent years (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). One impetus for the growth of AC programs was the teacher shortage. Additional factors were the rising numbers of teacher retirements, resulting from an aging workforce, high attrition rates among novice teachers, burgeoning student enrolments, and legislated limits on class size (United States Department of Educaiton Office of Innovation and Improvement, 2004). Concern about the quality of pre-service teachers prepared through traditional teacher education programs have also been identified as a factor in the growth of the AC (Stoddart & Floden, 1995).

According to Birkeland and Peske (2004, p. 1), as the AC programs proliferated in America, their variability increase in terms of “purpose, context, design and elements”. Furthermore, AC programs “vary across several dimensions, including but not limited to: the sponsoring agent, size of the program, participants recruited, and what the program offers participants” (p. 16). Among the various AC programs, teacher residency is an one important district-based alternative route to teacher certification that is designed mainly in response to difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers, and the shortage of teachers in academic fields such as science and maths for urban schools (Podgursky, 2004).

A core notion that is emphasised in the residency type programs concerns the value of learning to teach by doing (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Teacher residency programs value the importance of pairing academic course work with intensive classroom practice, along with learning from experienced mentor teachers. This approach is regarded as being similar to the way medical residents work with patients under the guidance of experienced doctors. Teacher residency programs provide teaching candidates with full professional immersion in a school environment, for an intensive on-the-job, or authentic learning experience. Residents work directly in classrooms and teach students with the guidance and support of mentor teachers. The overriding goal of this type of program is to graduate qualified teachers who are ready to teach independently right from their first day of employment. Thus, the residency is designed to provide a holistic entry into teaching and prepare more accomplished teachers, who are able to meet the learning needs of the diverse groups of learners that they are likely to encounter in any school classroom.

Since the teacher residency approach to teacher education is shorter than the campus-based program, it is difficult to make a definitive comparison as to its value. However, current research does provide some insights, though limited, on its potential to produce effective teachers. For example, graduates from AUSL and BTR in America, have been found to be equipped with well-developed skills and competencies that enhanced their effectiveness as beginning teachers (Berry, Montgomery, Curtis, et al., 2008). It is also found that principals rated 88% of BTR graduates as effective or more effective than their counterparts prepared through traditional teacher education programs (Berry, Montgomery, Curtis, et al., 2008).

Yet in both US and Australia whether teacher residency is a plausible solution to the shortage of qualified teachers, and whether these programs are more effective in producing school-ready teachers, needs further study.

2.2.2 Features of the residency model

Research evidence indicated that the following four key components that most teacher residency programs contain are pivotal in their effectiveness: early and extended periods of school-based teaching practice; integration of theory and practice; reflection, mentoring and scaffolding, and belonging to and collaborating with members of a professional learning community. Each of these will be now be elaborated.

2.2.2.1 *Early and extended periods of school-based teaching practice*

Instead of a practicum towards the end of the course, or for limited periods as special teaching placement blocks, as in many traditional undergraduate programs, teacher residency programs expose pre-service teachers to school-based teaching practice very early and maintain ongoing exposure. Thus in the TRP teaching is seen to be an integral part of the learning process rather than a short-term opportunity to practise what has been learnt during on-campus classes. This school-based emphasis is consistent with the view that novice teachers with teaching experience are better prepared to understand the ideas, theories, and concepts taught in their course work (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Denton (1982) suggested that early field experiences appeared to enhance learning and understanding about the principles of how to teach within a content area. It seems that when pre-service teachers have had multiple opportunities to experience and study the relationship of theory with practice, their learning is enhanced. Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) concluded that teacher candidates in these types of programs were more able to “see and understand both theory and practice differently if they were taking course work concurrently with fieldwork” (p. 401).

2.2.2.2 *Integration of theory-practice and reflection*

Many critics of traditional teacher education programs have charged that they were overly theoretical and separated from practice (Korthagen, Kessels, Koster, Lagerwerf, & Wubbels, 2001). More recently, Ure, Gogh, and Newton (2009) claimed that the separation of theory from practice was a core problem for teacher education. According to Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005), the breakdown

between theory and practice is an inherent problem in traditional university-based teacher education programs. Solomon (2009) identified three key problem areas: firstly, the traditional approach to teacher preparation adopts a stepwise approach to the “application of theory”, in which teaching candidates are supposed to learn theories at university and then go to schools to practise or apply what they have learned; secondly, the time spent on theoretical learning is overwhelmingly longer than that on teaching practice, and teaching practice is placed more or less at a later stage of the program; thirdly, there is inadequate communication between teacher educators at university and school practitioners, which acts to increase the risk of conflicting practices being advocated in schools and at university.

The move away from the traditional approach to the teacher residency approach worldwide has been prompted by the perceived need for pre-service teachers to undertake course work concurrently with real classroom teaching. Hence TRPs are believed to provide improved learning experiences because pre-service teachers to put theory they have learned into practice and continuously test, reflect on and improve their skills in real classrooms (Berry, Montgomery, Curtis, et al., 2008). This school-based emphasis allows residents to develop the ability to think like a teacher, and to put what they know into action (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). It is further surmised that residents are more likely to avoid being confused by mixed messages, contradictory theories, and ideas that are superficially conveyed in more traditionally delivered teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). This implies that a reflective rather than a technical orientation is promoted as the learning approach for the TRPs. Ferguson (1989) suggested that residents should not just stay at the level of simply knowing but be able to connect knowing with why and how. The residency experience provides multiple opportunities for the residents to reflect on how the theories they learn at university fit into the role of a professional teacher.

There is need for a balance between the time pre-service teachers spend in schools and at university. Even though recent teacher education reforms have tended to make programs more practical and school-based, making teacher education programs too practical can create another set of problems. Without sufficient theoretical input, school-based teacher education programs may place too much emphasis on teachers’ classroom management skills, pedagogical skills and their

ability to maintain a supportive learning environment. Moreover, there may be limited understanding about education in its broader sense. In the traditional model for teacher professional development, content-related professional knowledge forms the foundation of a pre-service teacher's understanding of teaching practice. It is crucial that teacher education programs provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to do substantial amounts of theory learning to facilitate the accumulation of content-related professional knowledge. The possession of content knowledge is also reported to have a generative effect on the development of pre-service teachers' professional practice skills, such as classroom management and assessment (Ball & Cohen, 1999). These skills need to be practised in an authentic teaching context in order for learners to link theory and practice. Student teachers are more able to enact new practices effectively when they learn content-specific strategies and tools that they are able to apply immediately and to continue to refine in a collaborative learning community (eventually becoming reflective practitioners) (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Equally important, knowledge for effective teaching often emerges from the practice itself. Thus, it is not enough for student teachers to just apply acquired knowledge to practice but also to develop innovative understandings of new ideas and actions, which emerge in the context of ongoing interactions.

2.2.2.3 Mentoring and scaffolding

Teacher residency programs recruit, select and train experienced teachers to work as mentor teachers, who work closely with residents inside and outside the classrooms providing scaffolding and support. Research showing the value of mentoring and scaffolding is abundant (Gardiner, 2011; Hawkey, 1997 #41; Hawkey, 1997; Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009; McIntyre, Hagger, & Wilkin, 1993). However, just placing students in practicum schools will not automatically provide them with a valuable experience of learning to teach (Goodman, 1986, cited in Ferguson, 1989). More recent work by Korthagen et al. (2001) identified the need for pre-service teachers to learn to link their knowledge about teaching with the knowledge of (doing) teaching. Evidence from Joyce and Showers (2002) suggested that, coaching was crucial for the realisation of skill transfer in teaching. Their work with classroom teachers demonstrated that embedded coaching provided the highest level of transferring a new skill to teaching.

Though Joyce and Showers' model was constructed mainly from studies of the professional development of practicing teachers, they proposed that this model is equally applicable to pre-service teachers' learning practices. This model presupposes that the mentor teachers do not just serve as role models, but act as also co-inquirers. Besides giving feedback, mentors often explain, discuss and analyse many issues that arise in the teaching context and help to form new inquiries. Darling-Hammond, Macdonald, Snyder, Whitford, Roscoe and Fickel (2000) claimed that if residents are taught to use strategies that might be useful in the classroom, without examples and models, they are likely to have less chance of gaining a deep understanding. Prospective teachers, who experience a mentored teaching experience that is tightly integrated with course work, are more likely to connect theoretical learning with their teaching. Roth (1989) found that rich conversations between pre-service teachers and mentor teachers brought about the integration of inquiry and explanation. This integration then effectively facilitated the deeper understanding and quicker transfer of the knowledge base for teaching and knowledge of practice. These claims were also supported by more recent research undertaken by Korthagen et al. (2001), who found that the inquiry process was essential to reflective practice, and that clinical supervision at the same time contributed to the residents' development as reflective practitioners. Rather than in the step-wise apprenticeship model of traditional teacher education programs, residents and Mentors are actively engaged in problem identification, inference, analysis, reflection, problem solving, and discussion of alternative strategies, which are all of pivotal importance in establishing reflective teaching practice (Roth, 1989).

2.2.2.4 Professional learning communities and collaboration

According to Berry, Montgomery, Curtis, et al. (2008, p. 16), teacher residency programs place residents in a school as a cohort "to cultivate professional learning communities and to foster collaboration among new and experienced teachers" Purposefully constructed professional learning communities that share norms and practices can be an especially powerful influence on learning. As Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) pointed out,

working together in communities, both new and more experienced teachers pose problems, identify discrepancies between theories and practices, challenge common routines, draw on the work of others for generative frameworks, and attempt to make visible

much of that which is taken for granted about teaching and learning. (p. 293)

Regular meetings of residents help to form an intellectual community that not only connects practice with course work but also deepens professional knowledge. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) also suggested there were three approaches to knowledge development ranging from the development of knowledge *for* practice, knowledge *in* practice, to knowledge *of* practice. Knowledge *for* practice refers to the knowledge teachers need to develop their practice, and includes knowledge of subject matter content, content pedagogy, theories of learning and development. Traditional teacher education programs have attached great importance to the teaching of these elements of knowledge. This learning is perceived as being transmitted from teaching educators to teachers or from experts to novices. Knowledge *in* practice emphasises teachers' knowledge in action, which is what accomplished teachers know about what is embodied in their practice, reflections and accounts. Knowledge in practice is practical, highly situated, and often acquired through reflection on experience. Thus, a collaborative professional learning community is crucial to the development of novice teachers' knowledge in action. Knowledge *of* practice is regarded as knowledge constructed in the context of use, emphasising the role of the teacher in constructing knowledge and learning, and growing through that process. Commenting on the importance of communities of practice in their model for teacher development, Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) claimed that the professional community placed a central role in pre-service teacher's development of knowledge of practice. They suggested further that initial teacher development requires "ongoing inquiry by teachers in their own classroom and into other systematic and practical sources of knowledge for addressing critical problems of practice"(p. 383).

2.2.3 Constraints of existing Teacher Residency programs and Alternative Certification

Despite the praise both teacher residency and AC type programs have received as an innovative pathways for teacher preparation, some researcher have raised concerns over their effectiveness in preparing teachers. However, to date no consensus has been reached due to the limited amount for research that has been undertaken, and to the afore-mentioned difficulty of making an effective comparison of the vastly different types of AC programs on offer and the contexts in which they

are delivered. Recent research findings suggest that the outcomes of AC programs depend not just on the implemented program itself, but also on the school context where pre-service teachers are placed for clinical practice, and on the pre-service teachers' personal attributes and previous teaching experiences (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007).

Humphrey and Wechsler (2007, p. 492) have criticised residency-type programs in terms of participants' commitment to teaching, seeing "alternative route teachers as temporary workers, using teaching as a bridge over a sluggish economy or as brief stop on the way to another career". The same researchers also suggest that participants in AC programs lack the educational skills they need to perform successfully in classrooms and challenged the much-touted benefit of on-the-job training. Humphrey and Wechsler argued that there are concerns that programs, like the AC programs, that place 'unprepared' (student) teachers in classrooms before completing formal training, will have a negative effect on school-students' academic achievement. The on-the-job training of novice teachers in underperforming schools was regarded as being likely to contribute further to the gap in student achievement. Stoddart and Floden (1995, p. 14) have raised further concerns regarding about limited focus of AC programs, which emphasise "the pragmatic and technical aspects of teaching" instead of "the theoretical, philosophical, or conceptual aspects" of teaching. Humphrey and Wechsler (2007, p. 507) claimed that the "short-cuts", taken by these programs have led to "the absence of sustained, carefully planned clinical experience" and that this is a "fundamental flaw of alternatives routes".

2.3 Initial Teacher Education in Australia

In Australia, ITE programs have comprised many different pathways, namely four-year undergraduate Bachelor of Education degrees, four-year double degrees comprising a degree in a subject discipline area and a degree in education, a one-year Graduate Diploma of Education after an initial three-year Bachelor's degree in the discipline area, and two-year graduate level Master of Teaching program after a Bachelor's degree in the discipline area (Mayer, Pechione, & Merino, 2013). According to official data, in 2014 there were 450 teacher education courses across 48 institutions for training some 80,000 teachers (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014).

As is the case in many other countries, ITE has been under intensive scrutiny from policy-makers, politicians, teacher registration authorities, teacher education practitioners and providers, and the wider community (Hattie, 2011). In particular, the university-based traditional teacher education programs have been subjected to scathing criticism, because allegedly they do not adequately prepare pre-service teachers for the realities of the classrooms in which they will teach (Loughran et al., 2013). These programs have been further criticised for their lengthy curriculum, insufficient clinical experience, lack of authentic learning environments, separation of theory and practice, and over-emphasis on course work, therefore producing pre-service teachers who were not ready to meet the challenges of teaching in today's schools (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). After an extensive review of existing national reports and research studies on teacher education, Ure (2010) concluded that the evidence demonstrated that beginning teachers were experiencing a breadth of problems and that these were likely to contribute to the large numbers of teachers leaving within the first three years of employment. Ure recommended "clearly more needed to be done to ensure teacher education programs prepared teacher candidates to be professionally ready and resilient to cope with the demands of school" (p. 461).

In response to these concerns, Federal and State governments have commissioned more than 101 reviews into the effectiveness of the existing teacher education system in Australia, with the latest report *Action now: Classroom Ready Teachers* being prepared in 2014 and released in 2015 (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014), *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning* (NSW Government, 2013), *Top of the class* (Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007) and *Australia's Teachers: Australia's Future* (Committee for the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education, 2003). Whereas these reviews have yielded promising suggestions, there still is no consensus on the quality of teacher education. The *Top of the Class* report asserted that "There is simply not a sufficiently rich body of research evidence to...come to any firm conclusions about the overall quality of teacher education in Australia. There is not even agreement on what quality in teacher education means" (Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007, p. 5). And the most recent report *Action now: Classroom Ready Teachers*, which suggested there was still a lack of reliable

research regarding initial teacher education and teaching practice in general. An the authors of the same report contended there was insufficient information for understanding what teacher practices should be considered as most effective and what teacher education approaches are the best in preparing beginning teachers ready for the classroom. (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014)

While the recommendations made in many of the reviews have led to improvements in teacher education in Australia, ongoing problems in the preparation of teachers appear to persist (Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007). National survey data has indicated that many beginning teachers were not satisfied with their pre-service education and did not feel that they had been adequately prepared for the reality of the teaching. These perceptions have been shared by other stakeholders of teacher education, particularly school principals, and mentors in Australia. And the high attrition rate of recently commencing teachers in the early years of employment has also been a concern for teacher educators, policy makers and the wider community. The areas of concern for Australian teacher education reported by the Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training (2007) are:

- aspects of the school-based professional experience components of courses;
- the weakness of the link between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’;
- the perceived lack of relevance of some of the theoretical components of courses; and
- the capacity of beginning teachers to deal adequately with classroom management issues, to perform assessment and reporting tasks, and to communicate with parents. (p. 8)

To address the quality issue, the report *Top of the Class recommended* that the following factors that are pertinent to the establishment and implementation of teacher education programs should be taken into consideration:

- the backgrounds and characteristics of students and teacher educators;
- selection processes;
- course length, course location and course structures;

- course content and delivery modes;
- course assessment procedures;
- the nature and length of professional experience;
- the nature and the strength of partnership between stakeholders; and
- the nature of the induction processes. (Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007, p. 9)

The New South Wales *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning* (2013) report described similar problems about teacher education. It pointed out that there were significant concerns about the relevance of some aspects of current teacher education courses. The report concluded that insufficient attention was being given to the practical aspects of teaching, for example, the programming and lesson planning, content knowledge, classroom and behaviour management, and broader understanding of issues. This report also put forward these recommendations that professional experience in teacher education programs should:

- occur early in the teacher education program;
- involve a range of experiences in a variety of schools;
- involve an extensive period of engagement in a school to experience the range of teaching roles beyond the classroom, through either internships or apprenticeship models; and
- involve a placement at the beginning of the school year to learn how to establish classroom routines at the beginning of the year. (NSW Government, 2013, p. 12)

A few years earlier Ingvarson, Beavis, Kleinhenz, and Elliott (2004) conducted a large-scale mapping study of pre-service teacher education in Australia that included selection processes, course structure and content, accreditation process, and professional experience, finding that the professional experience component of courses was under-resourced the area of greatest concern in providing a quality teacher education. They also noted that the financial and other constraints impacting on the quality of professional experience were:

- the high cost of running professional experience programs;

- the difficulties in providing adequate supervision and mentoring of pre-service teachers;
- the difficulties in finding enough schools and classes willing to host pre-service teachers; and
- the reluctance of schools to participate as partners in the development of new teacher professionals. (p. v)

When releasing the report *Action now: Classroom Ready Teachers*, the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group called for “structural and cultural change” and “an integrated delivery” of initial teacher education through the close partnership between providers, school systems and schools, which “underpins improvement to all aspects of the preparation of teachers” (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014, p. v). The report *claimed* the need to implement change to lift the quality of ITE in Australia was urgent and it required national leadership and collaborative efforts, identifying the main areas of concerns regarding the quality of current ITE in Australia:

- lack of effectiveness and efficiency in the application and implementation of national standards;
- lack of consistency, transparency or sophistication in the selection of entrants to ITE program;
- evidence of poor practice in some ITE programs that fail to prepare graduates with the content knowledge, evidence-based teaching strategies and skills to cater for diverse student learning needs;
- insufficient integration of teacher education providers with schools and systems for the development of new teachers or the delivery of adequate professional experience;
- inadequate assessment of the classroom readiness against the Graduate level Professional Standards;
- insufficient professional support for beginning teachers;

- lack of evidence regarding the effectiveness of ITE and their students entering and graduating from the programs. (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014)

The Advisory Group proposed a detailed list of 38 practical and implementable recommendations to improve the quality of the professional learning experience. Those that are relevant to this thesis are:

- higher education providers deliver integrated and structured professional experience throughout initial teacher education programs through formalised partnership agreements with schools;
- higher education providers guarantee that sufficient placements of appropriate timing and length are available for all pre-service teachers;
- higher education providers ensure pre-service teachers have early opportunities to assess their suitability for teaching, including through exposure to the classroom. (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014, p. xiv)

The Advisory Group acknowledged the importance of attracting suitable entrants to the ITE programs, providing adequate supervision during their professional experience placements, and their subsequent need of supports in early stage of employment. It recommended:

- higher education providers select the best candidates into teaching using sophisticated approaches that ensure initial teacher education students possess the required academic skills and personal characteristics to become a successful teacher;
- higher education providers identify entrants who may need additional support to meet the academic requirements of the program, and provide them with targeted support to ensure all pre-service teachers have the academic skills needed to become effective teachers;
- systems/schools be required to use the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers in identifying highly skilled teachers to supervise professional experience, and work with higher education providers to ensure rigorous, iterative and agreed assessment of pre-service teachers.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership develop guidelines to ensure supervising teachers have the skills required to be effective in the role; and

- school leaders actively lead the integration of pre-service teachers in the activities and culture of their school. (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014, pp. xiii-xiv)
- to assure the classroom readiness of ITE graduates the Advisory group called for strengthened assessment practices and recommended:
- higher education providers assess all pre-service teachers against the Graduate level of the Professional Standards; and
- the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership develop a national assessment framework, including requirements for a Portfolio of Evidence, to support higher education providers and schools to consistently assess the classroom readiness of pre-service teachers throughout the duration of their program. (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014, p. xiv)

2.4 The Australian Teacher Quality Reform

In 2014 The Australian Government expressed a strong desire to see Australia achieve better ranking in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) by targeting the quality of teaching. For example:

The Australian Government believes teacher quality is critical to the future prosperity of young Australians and the productivity of the nation. We intend to lift the quality and status of the teaching profession and believe that action needs to start when teachers are gaining their qualifications. (D. o. E. Australian Government, 2014)

Through the *Smarter School: Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership (TQNP) Program*, The Australian Government in 2009 proposed a ‘national solution’ for the reform of teacher education in Australia. The TQNP initiative pledged \$550 million over five years to improve teacher quality, and was designed to “attract, prepare, place, develop and retain quality teachers and school leaders in schools, and generally improve the quality of teaching” (Mayer et al.,

2013, p.128). The TRP in this study was an initiative funded by the TQNP initiative of Australian Government and implemented by the WA Government through the WA Department of Education. Under the auspices of the TQNP scheme, it was proposed that these initiatives would develop across Australia to focus on:

- attracting the best graduates to teaching, through additional pathways;
 - improving the quality of teacher training in partnership with universities;
 - developing national standards;
 - establishing national consistency in teacher registration to aid teacher mobility and retention;
 - developing and enhancing the skills and knowledge of teachers and school leaders through their careers;
 - improving retention by rewarding quality teachers and school leader; and
 - improving the quality and availability of teacher workforce data.
- (Australian Government, 2009)

It is interesting to note that the program characteristics of the TRP that is being reported in the current study was intended to embody the key reform features of the TQNP. For example, the TRP was designed to provide a pathway for attracting teaching candidates from a wider pool of people. The candidates comprised university graduates with various specialist backgrounds, and career changers whose skills and experience developed from existing careers were likely to be an asset to their future teaching. The TRP's selection process included an in-school activity and the partnership between the university and schools provided a stronger emphasis on the practice component of the program. As noted previously, this program was called the 'Residency' and was intended to better prepare pre-service teachers. It was, for example intended to ensure that residents would graduate with greater knowledge about classroom teaching and be able to apply theory to practice.

Action now: Classroom Ready Teachers report reinforces the Australian Government's further commitment to continued improvement of ITE. This report is intended to provide a blueprint for the critical and lasting reform of existing ITE (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2015). The

Australian Government issued an immediate response to the recommendations made by the Advisory Group, and seemed determined to make a real difference to the training of new teachers by responding with swift and decisive actions. The responses suggested that the Australian Government would strive to work with the state and territory education ministers, non-government schools, university and other key stakeholders to improve the quality of teacher preparation by addressing:

- strong quality assurance of teacher education courses;
- rigorous selection for entry to teacher education courses;
- improved structured practical experience for teacher education students;
- robust assessment of graduates to ensure classroom readiness; and
- national research and workforce planning capabilities. (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2015, p. 4)

In the recommendation statement the Australian Government has outlined specific measure to address each of these key areas and has decided that the measures will be implemented through the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). The Government acknowledged that successful implementation would help strengthen and ensure high quality and comprehensively-prepared graduates, establish a more rigorous accreditation process for ensuring excellent IET programs with transparent information and data, increase public confidence in Australia's teaching workforce (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2015).

2.4.1 Strengthening university and school partnerships

Teacher education reform in Australia and elsewhere has focused on the nature and strength of the university and school partnership that supports the integration of the academic and practical course components (Loughran et al., 2013). As noted earlier in this review, this partnership and integration were central to the findings of the Australian Government review *Top of the Class: Report on the Inquiry Into Teacher Education* (Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007). Researchers have suggested the quality of pre-service teacher education is “constructed through collaborative processes involving three key stakeholders: the pre-service teachers, schools and universities” (Ure, 2004 cited in

Godinho, White, Hay, & St Leger, 2007, p. 4). And in a later study, Ure, Gogh and Newton (2009) found that there was a need to improve the alignment from the learning expectations for the school placement component of teacher education programs with those held by school teachers and university academics.

2.4.2 Professional standards for teaching

Within the broad agenda of reforming ITE in Australia, an articulation of standards for teachers has emerged as part of the national strategy for improving teacher quality. Whereas most teacher registration authorities in each state previously developed their own version of professional standards for graduates and experienced teachers, they now comply the new national professional standards framework for teachers, which was established in February 2011. This was a cornerstone of the TQNP program and it was developed under the auspices of the Ministerial Council on Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs by the Australian Institute for AITSL. The framework outlines what teachers, in four stages of their career progression, should know and do across the domains of Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement. These new standards have been used nationally to guide registration or certification of teaching candidates, and the accreditation of teacher education programs.

According to Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2007), professional standards contain two elements, namely rallying and measurement. In terms of “rallying”, standards are developed to “describe a consensus model of what is most worthy, and most desirable to achieve, in teaching knowledge and practice” (p. 5). This notion was echoed by Ure’s (2009) explanation that teaching standards present a descriptive account of what good teachers need to know, what attitudes and attributes they need to have and what skills they need to be able to demonstrate. As for the Kleinhenz and Ingvarson’s second element, standards serve as “measures that provide specification of achievement” (p. 5). Kleinhenz and Ingavarson argued that standards therefore could be used “to describe a vision of teaching practice, based on a consensus of professional values and belief” on the one hand, and “as measurement tools for making professional judgments” (p. 5). In accordance with these dual purposes of standard, Kleinhenz and Ingvarson distinguished between “standards as professional values” and “standards as measures” (p. 5). As professional values, standards enable people to reach a shared understanding of what counts as quality teaching and

learning. In contrast, standards as measures can be used to define and gauge professional performance of the teacher.

Sachs (2003) argued “professional standards for teachers have significant potential to provide the necessary provocation for teachers to think about their work, classroom activities and professional identity in quite fundamentally different and generative ways” (p.185). Elmore (1996) has also made some particularly illuminating remarks about the significance of standards for guiding teacher learning and professional development:

Why is the existence of external norms important? Because it institutionalises the idea that professionals are responsible for looking outward at challenging conceptions of practice, in addition to looking inward at their values and competencies...Without external normative structures, teachers have no incentive to think of their practice as anything other than a bunch of traits. The existence of strong external norms also has the effect of legitimating the proportion of teachers in any system who draw their ideas about teaching from a professional community, and who compare themselves against a standard external to their school or community. External norms give visibility and status to those who exemplify them (p. 185).

The current study has adopted Kleinhenz and Ingvarson’s conceptualisation of the teaching standards to examine residents’ professional learning over the course of the TRP. The set of standards used for analysis in this study was the Western Australian Professional Standards for Teaching that was developed by Western Australian College of Teaching (referred to as WACOT Standards), prior to the implementation of the national standards in 2011. The Western Australian College of Teaching (WACOT), as a state teacher registration authority, was replaced by the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA) on the 7th of December 2012. Subsequently, TRBWA made amendments to their previous WACOT Standards to align with the new National Professional Standards for Teachers. Given that the current study commenced before the new Professional Standards for Teachers in Western Australia was in place, and that the design of the instrument was informed by the WACOT Standards for Teaching, the new TRBWA Standards were not used, and the WACOT Standards for Teaching were retained for use during the later stage of the research. Furthermore, considering that this study was conducted in the context of Western Australia, where the TRP was accredited by,

and its graduates were registered with WACOT, the WACOT Standards for Teaching were considered most appropriate to the study. The WACOT Standards for Teaching were established to guide the achievement and maintenance of full registration of teachers in the schools of Western Australia, and to delineate the abilities, experience, knowledge or skills expected of registered teachers. The WACOT Standards comprised nine standards outlining what teachers should know and be able to do, which are grouped into three domains of teaching: Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement. For each standard, multiple descriptors were used to articulate what respective standards entailed. An overview of the WACOT Professional Teaching Standards is presented in Table 2.1. A full copy of the WACOT Standards for Teaching is located in Appendix G.

Table 2.1: Western Australian Professional Standards for Teaching

Domains of teachings	Standard	
Professional Knowledge	Students	1. Teachers know, respect, and responsive to the diverse needs of their students
	Curriculum	2. Teachers know and teach relevant curriculum content and skills.
	Learning and teaching	3. Teachers know how their students learn and how to teach them effectively
Professional Practice	Teaching practice	4. Teachers use a range of teaching practices and resources to engage students in effective teaching.
	Learning environment	5. Teachers create and maintain a safe challenging and supportive learning environment.
	Planning and assessing	6. Teachers plan, implement, assess and report for effective learning.
Professional Engagement	Professional learning	7. Teachers reflect on, critically evaluate and improve their professional knowledge and skills.
	Professional responsibilities	8. Teachers act in an ethical and professional manner to uphold the integrity of the profession
	Effective partnership	9. Teachers establish and maintain collaborative partnerships within the school and wider community

2.5 Towards a ‘clinical’ model of initial teacher education

In recent years efforts to improve the quality of teacher education worldwide have been focused on “the importance of well-supervised clinical practice as a critical element of effective teacher preparation”(Darling-Hammond, 2014, p. 547)

The United States National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), prior to its amalgamation into the Council for Accreditation of Education Providers (CAEP) in 2013, proclaimed that teacher education needed to move away from “a norm which emphasised academic preparation and course work loosely linked to school-based experiences” to “programs that are grounded in clinical

practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses” (NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel, 2010, p. ii). NCATE recognised the potential of a clinically based approach to allow aspiring teachers,

to integrate theory with practice, to develop and test classroom management and pedagogical skills, to hone their use of evidence in making professional decisions about practice, and to understand decisions about practice, and to understand and integrate the standards of their profession. (p. 27)

Furlong and Maynard (1995) had previously asserted that three distinctive factors in the design and implementation of initial teacher education programs influenced pre-service teacher learning: 1) time spent in school, which was seen to play the central role professional preparation; 2) what pre-service teachers were expected to achieve, including the competencies they needed to manage day-to-day school participation; and 3) that schools, rather than universities, had a key role in helping pre-service teachers develop those competences. Humphrey and Wechsler (2007) drew similar conclusions and added the importance of the aspirations of the pre-service teacher. Cranton (1994) suggested that for teacher education institution to produce effective teachers, the three factors that needed to be taken into consideration were: the program (as implemented); the school context in which the professional learning occurs; and the career trajectory of the individual participant. The instigators of the TRP program in this study have apparently attempted to align these elements, and the study being reported here has been designed to map the professional learning trajectories of the participating residents.

Darling-Hammond (2010) claimed that there were benefits to be gained in the implementation of a clinically oriented residency model of teacher education, as follows

...the most powerful programs require students to spend extensive time in the field throughout the entire program, examining and applying the concepts and strategies they are simultaneously learning about in their course. Candidates work alongside teachers who can show them how to teach in ways that are responsive to learning while they take interwoven course work. (p. 40)

She further elaborated that one typical requirement of strong teacher education program was the extensive time in the field. This should be a full academic year of student teacher experience with direct supervision of one or more

teachers who have the expertise of catering for the diverse needs of the student. Darling-Hammond (2014) concluded that “strengthening clinical practice in teacher education is clearly one of the most important strategies for improving the competence of new teachers and the capacity of the teaching force as a whole” (p. 557).

In a recent review of seven successful teacher education programs in the US, Darling-Hammond (2014) has concluded that program structure alone was not the decisive factor in determining the success of these teacher education programs. She identified seven common features that made a difference:

- a common, clear vision of good teaching that permeates all course work and clinical experiences, creating a coherent set of learning experience;
- well-defined standards of professional practice and performance that are used to guide and evaluate course work and clinical work;
- a strong, core curriculum, taught in the context of practice, grounded in knowledge of child and adolescent development and learning, an understanding of social and cultural contexts, curriculum, assessment, and subject matter pedagogy;
- extended clinical experiences – at least 30 weeks of supervised practicum and student teaching opportunities in each program – that are carefully chosen to support the ideas presented in simultaneous, closely interwoven course work,
- extensive use of case methods, teacher research, performance assessments, and portfolio evaluation that apply learning to real problems of practice;
- explicit strategies to help students confront their own deep-seated beliefs and assumptions about learning and students and to learn about the experiences of people different from themselves; and
- strong relationships, common knowledge, and shared beliefs among school-and university-based faculty jointly engaged in transforming teaching, schooling, and teacher education. (p. 548)

Similarly, Loughran, Korthagen & Russell (2013) have constructed the following seven underlying principles of learning for teacher education programs, based on their analysis of the effective features of three national programs, in Australia, the Netherlands, and Canada. The principles are:

- promotes learning to teach through conflicting and competing demands
- incorporates a view of knowledge as a subject to be created rather than as a created subject
- shifts the focus from the curriculum to the learner
- involves student teachers in research about teaching and learning
- emphasises learning to teach through working closely with their peers
- is established through meaningful relationships between schools, universities, and student teachers
- employs teaching and learning approaches in the program that are modelled by the teacher educators in their own practice

These principles, and the finding of Darling-Hammond (2014), accentuate the need for professionally focused, authentic program elements to ensure initial teacher program design is responsive to the expectations, professional and practical developments and needs of student teachers.

2.6 Learning to Teach

What teachers need to know and be able to do has preoccupied teacher educators and scholars of teacher education for many decades. At the same time, how teachers learn to teach has been the focus of many research studies. Influenced by developments in learning theory and new understandings of teaching, scholars have provided various explanations about how teachers learn and develop their practice over time.

2.6.1 The concept of learning

In a review of research on learning to teach, Borko and Putman (1996) defined learning as “an active, constructive process that is heavily influenced by an individual’s existing knowledge and beliefs and is situated in particular contexts”

(p.673 -675). This definition underscores two notions of teacher learning. Firstly, learning is not a passive process of absorbing new information; teachers interpret new knowledge and experiences through their existing beliefs and modify and reinterpret new ideas on the basis of what they already know and believe. Secondly, what a teacher learns is influenced by the social and cultural contexts in which the learning is acquired and used.

According to Feiman-Nemser (2008), teacher learning is a multifaceted process with rich interactions between what teachers bring and what they encounter, including the contexts of their learning. Various learning experiences and associated settings, including university courses, school-based practice and related activities in schools and classrooms, as well professional partnerships through mentoring relationships and other collaborative learning are all likely to influence pre-service teachers' adoption and use of new knowledge, practices and their ongoing learning. Understanding learning to teach requires knowledge about how learners make sense of the various experiences they derive from these different learning settings. The researcher believed further research about pre-service teachers' experiences and their meaning making would assist teacher educators to understand how learning occurs in teacher education programs.

Mezirow (1990) proposed that learning begins with the making of meaning. To make meaning signifies the act of making sense of an experience, or to make an interpretation of it. When subsequently this interpretation is used to guide decision making of action, then making meaning becomes learning. According to (Mezirow, 1990) learning is "the process of making a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of an experience, which guides subsequent understanding, appreciation, and action (p.1).

Feiman-Nemser (2008) observed that learning to teach can be conceptualised around four broad themes: learning to think like a teacher, learning to know like a teacher, learning to feel like a teacher and learning to act like a teacher. Aligned with contemporary understandings of learning and teaching, this conceptualisation emphasises "the interconnection of content, process and contexts in learning to teach" (p. 698).

Feiman-Nemser's (2008) first theme of *learning to think like a teacher* refers to the intellectual work of teaching. Feiman-Nemser assumes that a critical examination of one's existing beliefs, a transition to pedagogical thinking, and the development of meta-cognitive awareness are essential for learning to think like a teacher. It follows that opportunities to examine critically existing beliefs in light of new possibilities and understandings are likely to help pre-service teachers to foster new ideas and practices. Learning to think like a teacher means moving beyond naïve beliefs to embrace more justifiable views of teaching, learning, subject matter and students. It also means developing the capacity to react quickly to unprepared situations, and reflect on and adjust one's practice

The second theme, *learning to know like a teacher*, highlights the knowledge base of teaching. According to Feiman-Nemser, teachers need to have deep knowledge of a subject, understand how children grow and learn and how culture and language influence their learning. They need to know and understand curriculum, pedagogy, classroom organisation and assessment, amongst others things (Feiman-Nemser, 2008).

Feiman-Nemser's the third theme, *learning to feel like a teacher*, points to the fact that teaching and learning to teach are deeply personal work, involving a teacher's emotion, and identity and their intellect. The fourth theme, learn to act like a teacher, means teachers need a repertoire of skill, strategies and routines and the judgment to figure out what to do and when to do it. In addition to establishing routines to manage teaching, teachers are faced with unpredictable situations that force them to constantly absorb new information and use it. These processes contribute to the development of what cognitive scientists call "adaptive expertise" (Hatano & Oura, 2003).

Feiman-Nemser's (2008) four-themed conceptualisation appears to be congruent with what Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) claimed to be the three widely documented problems in learning to teach. First, they suggests that learning to teach requires beginning teachers to think and understand teaching in different ways to what they have learned from their own experiences as students. This learning has been described as "the apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975 p, 63), and is understood to occur often through the experience of being a student in traditional classroom settings. These experiences are considered to exert a

major influence on new teachers' preconceptions about teaching and learning. Second, Darling-Hammond and Bransford indicate learning to teach requires new teachers not only need to develop the ability to think like a teacher but also to put what they learn into action, which is referred to as the problem of enactment (Kennedy, 1999). The third problem of learning to teach that they suggest involves the problem of complexity. Although some aspects of teaching can be made somewhat routine, the complex, uncertain, multidimensional nature of teaching poses an undeniable barrier to new teachers. Helping new teachers learn to overcome these barriers is crucial if initial teacher education programs are to be effective. (Carter, 1990 cited in Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998) implied that traditional teacher education programs did not adequately respond to these learning problems, because most of them were based on the view that learning to teach was a process of acquiring knowledge about teaching. Carter claimed further that in many traditional teacher education programs pre-service teachers are taught about what strategies might be useful in school classrooms. Without examples, models or opportunities to validate and explore newly acquired strategies, it is difficult for pre-service teachers to achieve deep understandings and to become capable of enactment. The basic assumption underlining such traditional teacher education programs is that the university provides theory, skills, knowledge and strategies, the school provides the field setting where such knowledge is applied and practised, and the beginning teacher provides the individual effort that integrates it all.

In an in-depth review of 93 empirical studies on learning to teach, Wideen et al. (1998) found that practically all the studies reviewed were conducted within the theory and practice setting of the traditional model of teacher education. They also reported, what has emerged, as a response to a more productive approach to learning how to teach, was a program design that is built upon the beliefs of the beginning teachers. Wideen et al. elaborated further that having beginning teachers examine their prior beliefs about teaching was an essential first step in the process of learning to teach. This helped to address the problem of "the apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975 p.63). According to Wideen et al., the next step in learning to teach then becomes a process of negotiating and satisfying the teaching role within a notion of good practice. Wideen et al. claimed such an approach implies that learning to teach is a deeply personal activity in which the individual concerned has

first to deal with his or her prior beliefs in the light of expectations from university, school, and society, and in the context of teaching. It also implies that a change in beliefs may result in a change in teaching practice.

In an extensive review of research on pre-service teachers' development, Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) came up with similar findings. They suggested that an effective framework for teacher development must include opportunities for "new teachers (to) learn to teach in a community that enables them to develop a vision for their practices; a set of understandings about teaching, learning and children; dispositions about how to use this knowledge; practices that allow them to act on their intentions and beliefs; and tools that support their efforts" (p. 385). Darling-Hammond and Bransford argued that to begin with pre-service teachers needed to "have a sense of where they are going and how they are going to get students there ...this vision together with powerful images of good practice can help new teachers to reflect on their work, guide their practice, and direct their future learning" (p. 386). They suggested the development of a vision for teaching could help address the apprenticeship of observation and was prerequisite to the process of enactment. In addition, Darling-Hammond and Bransford argued teachers needed to have a deep understanding of content knowledge and how to make it accessible to others, which is also referred to as Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as defined by Shulman and Shulman (2004). Darling-Hammond and Bransford believed that to make content accessible, teachers need an understanding of students and their prior knowledge and experiences, and an understanding of the learning process. In order to for pre-service teachers to put these understanding into practice, Darling-Hammond and Bransford contended that teachers need to develop tools (conceptual and practical resources) for classroom teaching, and to integrate understandings and tools into a set of practices, to form beginning repertoire of classroom enactment. They claimed that practice is informed by understandings and it is seen to be intimately connected to tools. Furthermore, teachers need to develop a set of disposition towards teaching, students and the role of the teacher. Darling-Hammond and Bransford's proposed framework acknowledge that learning to teach occurs with communities, which may include the professional community of the classroom and other clinical settings. They claimed that "purposefully constructed

professional communities that share norms and practices that can be especially powerful influence on learning” (p. 388).

Darling-Hammond and Bransford’s (2005) framework emphasises the importance of maintaining coherence in development of teacher education program, and indicates in a well-integrated and coherent program, learning is enhanced “when learners encounter mutually reinforcing ideas and skills across learning experiences, particularly when these are grounded in strategically chosen content and conveyed through effective pedagogies” (p.393). Darling-Hammond and Bransford identified areas of potential conflict for teachers, as they learn to teach in different settings. Teacher educators needed to examine how these different elements of a pre-service teacher’s learning were reflected in the school placement and university components of the program. These authors concluded that lack of integration between school and university is a common problem for teacher education and might lead to differences in the emphasis on the use of tools, practices, and dispositions.

Darling-Hammond and Bransford’s (2005) framework has helped the researcher to maintain a focus on the holistic nature of initial teacher development. It emphasises the interrelationships between pre-service teachers’ learning and development and the contexts in which that learning occurs. It permits the study to move beyond a simplistic model of teacher development involving progressive step-wise development through a series of universal stages, regardless of setting or experiences. Darling-Hammond and Bransford’s framework is also aligned with the cognitive psychologists’ explanation of how individual learning unfolds and with a broader focus that includes a sociocultural perspective on the context and conditions that promote learning.

2.6.2 Professional identity

In terms of learning to teach, the notion of professional identity has been receiving more and more attention. The teacher education community has become increasingly concerned with how beginning teachers think about themselves and how they undergo a substantial personal and professional transformation. As Hamachek (1999) pointed out, “The more that teachers know about themselves – the private curriculum within – the more their personal decisions are apt to be about how to pave the way for better teaching” (p.209).

Multiple definitions of professional identity are available within the research literature. Based on the findings of a three-year study of twenty-two graduates through their first years of teaching, Kosnik and Beck (2009) found that professional identity was one of the seven key elements that should be prioritised in teacher education. These authors provided a very broad definition of professional identity, suggesting “by professional identity we mean how teachers perceive themselves professionally. It includes their sense of their goals, responsibilities, style, effectiveness, level of satisfaction, and career trajectory” (p. 130). Winsalde (2002, p. 35) considered professional identity as the forging of “self-description” confirmed by the social and cultural norm within their context. This interpretation is congruent with the De Ruyter and Conroy’s (2002 p. 515) notion of “socially constructed identity”.

Professional identity derives from pre-service teachers’ interpretation and reinterpretation of experiences, and it is also driven by a person’s aspirations of what they want to be (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Smeby, 2007).

Wenger (1998) considered the formation of teacher identity occurs in response to experience in terms of *engagement, imagination and alignment*. He suggested that through *engagement*, teachers establish and maintain joint enterprises and negotiate meanings, allowing teachers to invest in what they do and in their relationship with others in order to obtain a sense of who they are. Teachers develop their teaching identity through *imagination*, by which they create images of the world and their place within it across time and space by extending beyond their own experience. For Wenger *Alignment* regulates teacher’s behaviours within broader structures and enterprises, enabling the identity of a larger group to become part of their identities. Wenger further suggested teachers forge their identities through participating in socially meaningful activities that are respected by particular communities, thus membership within a community constitutes an important factor in the development of a teacher’s identity.

In the current study the researcher considers how the residents develop their teaching identity in response to the experiences they have in the TRP, including how the personal attributes of residents as adult learners, and the context of their learning experience in the school-based clinical component of the ITE program affected their development and growth in confidence as teachers.

2.6.3 Learning to teach: reflecting a process of transformation

Learning to teach has long been recognised as a complex enterprise, and there is no consensus about how a teacher develops from a novice or lay-person to a professionally ready practitioner of teaching. As conceptions of teacher education have evolved from the ‘training’ model of the pre-1980’s, with its underlying behaviourist philosophy of learning, to the ‘reflective practice’ model of the 1990s, the explanation of the process of learning to teach has changed. This change represents a shift away from learning as a passive process, primarily characterised as receiving information and developing the right responses to contextual stimuli in teaching, to learning as a reflective process in which pre-service teachers are actively engaged in learning through activities that prompt them to reflect on their pre-existing beliefs and the effects of these on their professional practice (Mayer et al., 2013). This later construction entails an active, process that is mediated by the individual’s existing knowledge and beliefs (Borko and Putman (1996). Larrivee (2000) argued that “unless teachers engage in critical reflection and ongoing discovery they stay trapped in unexamined judgments, interpretations, assumptions and expectations” (p.294). Larrivee’s perception of learning to teach is congruent with Mezirow’s (1991) transformative learning theory. For example, Mezirow (1996, p. 162) defined transformative learning as “the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experiences in order to guide future action”. Mezirow (1991) had previously proposed that “we as human beings need to understand the meaning of our experiences, and learn to think for ourselves instead of acting upon the purpose, beliefs, values, feelings and judgment of others” (p.5). This researcher takes Mezirow’s transformative learning theory as an important channel for understanding how pre-service teachers, as adult learners who are learning to teach are able to become more autonomous thinkers. Autonomy is achieved when these learners are able to negotiate their own values, beliefs and perceptions instead of uncritically acting on received ideas and judgments of others. As a framework to explore this process, Mezirow’s transformative learning theory is particularly useful, because it goes beyond content knowledge acquisition, memorising codes or learning facts by providing “a complex description of how learners construe, validate and reformulate the meaning of their experiences” (Cranton, 1994, p. 22) .

2.6.3.1 *Adult learning and Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory*

Mezirow's transformative learning theory has been one of the most influential theories for researchers' framing of how adults learn. Learning to teach is reflective of the core features of how adults learn, in which individuals "acquire specific sets of knowledge, engage in learning to solve immediate problems, and question their own and others' assumptions and values" (Cranton, 1994, p. 4).

Mezirow (1991) argued transformative theory is "a theory of adult learning which attempts to describe and analyse how adults learn to make meaning of their experience" (p.198). He further claimed that transformative learning is not an add-on educational practice, but is the essence of adult education (Mezirow, 1997). He contended that the primary goal of adult learning is "to help the individual become a more autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his or her own values, meanings, and purposes rather than to uncritically act on those of others" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 10). Mezirow's opinion is supported by other scholars; for example, Taylor (2000, p. 1) posited that "transformative learning theory is uniquely adult, abstract, idealised, and grounded in the nature of human communication. It seeks to explain how adults' expectations, framed within cultural assumptions and presuppositions, directly influence the meaning individuals derive from their experiences." Cranton (1994) argued that transformative learning is one of the critical goals of adult education. She provided a relatively straightforward explanation of why transformative learning is potentially a unique tool for exploring learning to teach:

By the time they reach adulthood, people have acquired a way of seeing the world, a way of interpreting their experiences, and a set of values. Although adults continue to acquire new knowledge and skills, they often must integrate new experiences with prior learning. When this integration does not occur easily and contradictions or dilemmas result, the prior learning must be examined and some adjustment made. Individual can reject the contradictory new information or revise their previous views. This, simple stated, is the process of reflection and transformative learning. (p. 22)

2.6.3.2 *Overview of Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory*

Mezirow's transformative learning theory has been built based on a constructivist assumption that "meaning exists within ourselves rather than in external forms such as books and that the personal meanings that we attribute to our experience are acquired and validated through human interactions and

communication” (Mezirow, 1991, p. xiv). Mezirow (2000b) defined transformative learning as,

the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of references (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action.(p.7-8)

Mezirow (2000a) explained that a frame of reference or meaning perspective was “the structure of assumptions and expectations through which we filter sense impression”, and it “selectively shapes and delimits perceptions, cognition, feelings, and disposition by predisposing our intentions, expectations, and purpose” (p.16). A frame of reference comprises habits of mind and subsequent points of view (see Figure 2.1). Habits of mind are “a set of assumptions – broad, generalised, or orienting predispositions that acts as a filter for interpreting the meaning of experience” (p.17). Habits of minds are expressed in a point of view, which comprises clusters of meaning schemes, or “sets of immediate specific expectations, beliefs, feelings, attitudes, and judgments” (p.18). This shapes a particular interpretation and determines how we typify objects and assign causality. Thus, meaning schemes or points of view can be seen as specific, and often unexamined and unconscious. Frames of reference or meaning perspectives are related to professional knowledge, social views, spiritual beliefs, self-concepts, aesthetic preferences and so forth. They are broad and generalised ways of seeing the world, which have primarily resulted from cultural assimilation and the idiosyncratic influence of others. Yet people can and do become aware of them. People can transform their frame of reference by critically reflecting on the assumptions upon which their interpretation, beliefs and habit of mind or points of views are based (Mezirow, 1997). Therefore Mezirow (1997) considered transformative learning as the process of effective change in a frame of reference. It involves “transforming a problematic frame of reference to make it more dependable in our adult life by generating opinions and interpretations that are more justified” (Mezirow, 2000a, p. 20). In this sense, transformative learning could be understood as “a way of problem solving by defining a problem or by redefining or reframing the problem” (Mezirow, 2000a, p. 20).

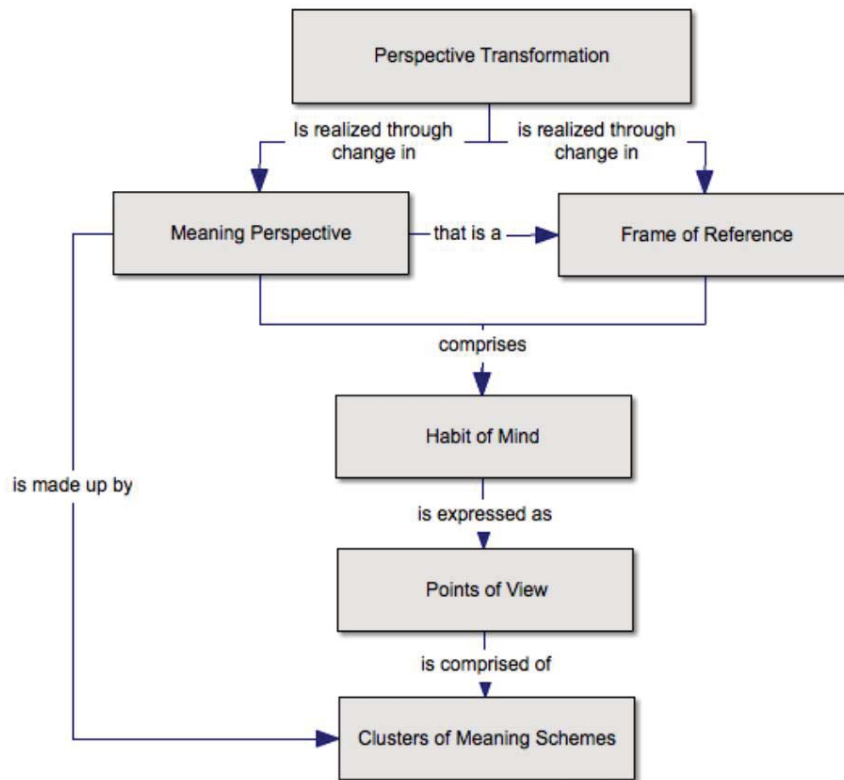


Figure 2.1: Diagrammatic representation of Mezirow's (2000) revised transformative learning theory, adapted from (Kitchenham, 2008)

2.6.3.3 Transformative and informative learning

According to Mezirow (2000b), learning occurs through one of four ways: elaborating existing frames of reference

- learning new frames of reference
- transforming points of view
- transforming habits of mind

Mezirow (1991) also argued that not all learning is transformative. Kegan in (Mezirow, 2000a) identified two kinds of learning: informative and transformative. He argued that informative learning involves changing *what* we know, and suggested that this form of learning includes, “learning aimed at increasing our fund of knowledge, at increasing our repertoire of skills, at extending already established cognitive structures to deepen the resources available to an existing frame of reference” (p.48). This kind of learning is literally *in-form-active* as it adds valuable new contexts into the existing form of our way of knowing. Kegan defined

transformative learning as learning aimed at changes in *how* we know. That is to say, informative learning occurs within existing frames of reference, whereas transformative learning occurs when there is a change in a frame of reference. Figure 2.2, illustrates this further. Kegan explained that, “informative learning involves a kind of leading in, or filling of the form”, while “transformative learning puts the form itself at risk of change” (p.49). Kegan saw both kinds of learning as valuable and necessary, and that which learning should be emphasised depends on the context of the learning.

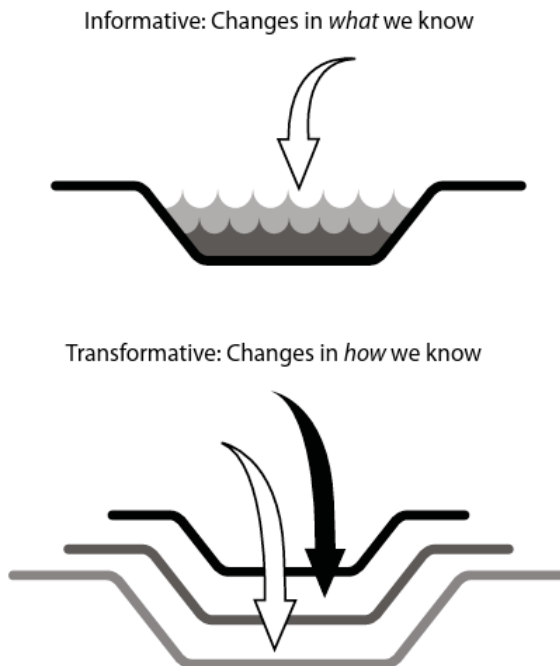


Figure 2.2: Informative and transformative learning (Kegan, 2008, p. 50)

2.6.3.4 Critical reflection triggering transformative Learning

Mezirow’s transformative learning explains changes in meaning perspectives that evolve in two domains of learning: instrumental learning, focused on learning through task-oriented problem solving and determination of cause and effect relationships, and communicative learning, focused on learning involved in understanding the meaning of what others communicate to and with you. Mezirow’s (1991) description of these learning domains are based on Herbermas (1971) classification of interest and knowledge.

Reflection is a central concept in transformative learning theory. Mezirow (1991, p. 104) defined reflection as “the process of critically assessing the content,

process, or premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to our experience”. Mezirow (1991) claimed that reflection helps individuals to validate prior learning, or attend to the justification for their beliefs. Based on this definition, he further distinguished three kinds of reflection. *Content reflection*, which is the examination of the content or description of a problem; *Process reflection* refers to assessing the methods of problem solving. *Premise reflection* occurs when the problem itself is questioned. In differentiating these three, Mezirow (1991) wrote,

content and process reflection are the dynamics by which our beliefs –meaning schemes – are changed, that is become reinforced, elaborated, created, negated, confirmed, or identified as problems and transformed. Premise reflection is the dynamic by which our beliefs systems –meaning perspectives – become transformed (p.111).

As learners assess their assumptions about the content or process of problem solving and find them unjustified, they create new ones or transform their old assumptions. When occasionally learners are forced to assess or reassess the basic premise they have taken for granted and find it unjustified, perspective transformation may result. This is to say, through content and process reflection people can change their meaning schemes, and through premise reflection people can transform their meaning perspectives.

In Mezirow’s opinion, transformation of meaning schemes through reflection may be an everyday occurrence because it does not involve self-reflection, whereas transformation of meaning perspectives takes place less frequently, and often involves critical self-reflection upon the distorted premises sustaining the structure of assumptions and expectations. Therefore Mezirow sees perspective transformation as:

a process of becoming critically aware of how and why our presuppositions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; of reformulating these assumptions to permit a more inclusive, discriminating, permeable, and integrative perspective, and of making decisions or otherwise acting upon these new understandings (Mezirow, 1990, p. 14).

2.6.3.5 *Steps towards transformative learning*

Mezirow did not see transformation theory as a stage theory, but he agreed it emphasises that people make intentional movements in adulthood to resolve problematic perspectives and to move to developmentally advanced conceptual structures (Mezirow, 1991, p. 160). He proposed that when learners are engaged in transformative learning, they are able to enhance the level of awareness of the context of their beliefs and feelings; they criticise their assumptions and particularly premises, and assess alternative perspectives; they then make a decision to negate an old perspective in favour of a new or to make a synthesis of old and new; they are able to take action based upon the new perspective, and often desire to fit the new perspectives into the broader context of their life. This notion of Mezirow is supported by Cranton (2002), who argued that “transformative learning is not a linear process, yet there is some progression to it, perhaps spiral-like” (p.65).

According to Mezirow (1991), to transform meaning perspectives people normally go through a sequence of learning activities. The sequence may start with a disorienting dilemma and finish with a changed self-concept. This changed self-concept then enables the learners to reintegrate the new perspective into their life. The sequence of transformative learning activities does not indicate invariable developmental steps, rather the activities should be understood as sequential moments of meaning becoming clarified.

Based on a national study of women returning to college who had participated in an academic re-entry program, Mezirow (1995) identified 10 steps that led to perspective transformation.

1. a disorienting dilemma;
2. self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt or shame;
3. a critical assessment of assumptions;
4. recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared;
5. exploration of options for new roles, relationships and actions;
6. planning a course of action;
7. acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans;

8. provisional trying of new roles;
9. building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and
10. a reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective. (p. 50)

Three common themes of Mezirow's theory are the centrality of experiences, critical reflection, and rational discourse in the process of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1995). Firstly, it is the learner's experience that is the starting point and the subject matter for transformative learning (Mezirow, 1995). Experience is seen as socially constructed, which can be deconstructed and acted upon, thus giving rise to critical reflection. Secondly critical reflection refers to questioning the integrity of assumptions and beliefs based on prior experience. It often occurs in response to an awareness of a contradiction among our thoughts, feelings, and actions, which according to Mezirow serves as a "disorienting dilemma". In essence, we realise something is not consistent with what we hold to be true and act in relation to our world. Reflection is "the process of turning our attention to the justification for what we know, feel, believe and act upon" (Mezirow, 1995, p. 46). Thirdly, rational discourse is the essential medium through which transformation is promoted and developed. In contrast to everyday discussions, rational discourse is used "when we have reason to question the comprehensibility, truth, appropriateness, (in relation to norms), or authenticity (in relation to feelings) of what is being asserted or to question the credibility of the person making the statement" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 77). Discourse becomes the medium for critical reflection to be put into action, where experience is reflected upon and assumptions and beliefs are questioned, and where meaning schemes and meaning structures are ultimately transformed. In order to foster transformative learning, certain conditions should be in place for occurrence of rational discourse, including: an established a sense of safety, openness, and trust; access to accurate and complete information; the use of instructional methods that are learner focused, and opportunities for participants to use problem solving and critical reflection to explore alternative perspectives.

Mezirow (1991) also suggested that for adult educators who wish to encourage transformative learning, their primary responsibility is to foster learner's

reflection upon their own beliefs or meaning schemes through a critical examination of the history, context, and consequences of their assumptions and premises. His view is also supported by Quinnan (1997) who suggested processes that are believed to foster transformative learning are predicated on experiences that challenge students to review and assess their personal value system

Transformative learning as articulated by Mezirow has many common elements with the research on reflective processes in learning to teach discussed throughout this literature review. For this reason, the researcher's study of how pre-service teachers learn to become teachers in the TRP includes a focus on whether the process of learning to teach can be seen to be a transformative process. The study then seeks to identify the nature of any transformative and informative learning that occur and how this has been influenced by the residents' experience in the TRP.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

In the review the researcher built a framework for the examination of pre-service teacher's learning experiences for this study. Figure 2.3 is a visual representation of this conceptual framework. Within the context of a Western Australian teacher residency program, the researcher examines the professional learning experience of pre-service teachers across the three learning domains of Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement stipulated in the Western Australian Professional Standards for Teaching. And pre-service teachers' learning processes in the TRP were investigated to determine evidence of their informative and transformative learning outcomes. The results are reflected against the backdrop of existing teacher residency programs, traditional ITE program and the Australian Teacher Quality Reforms.

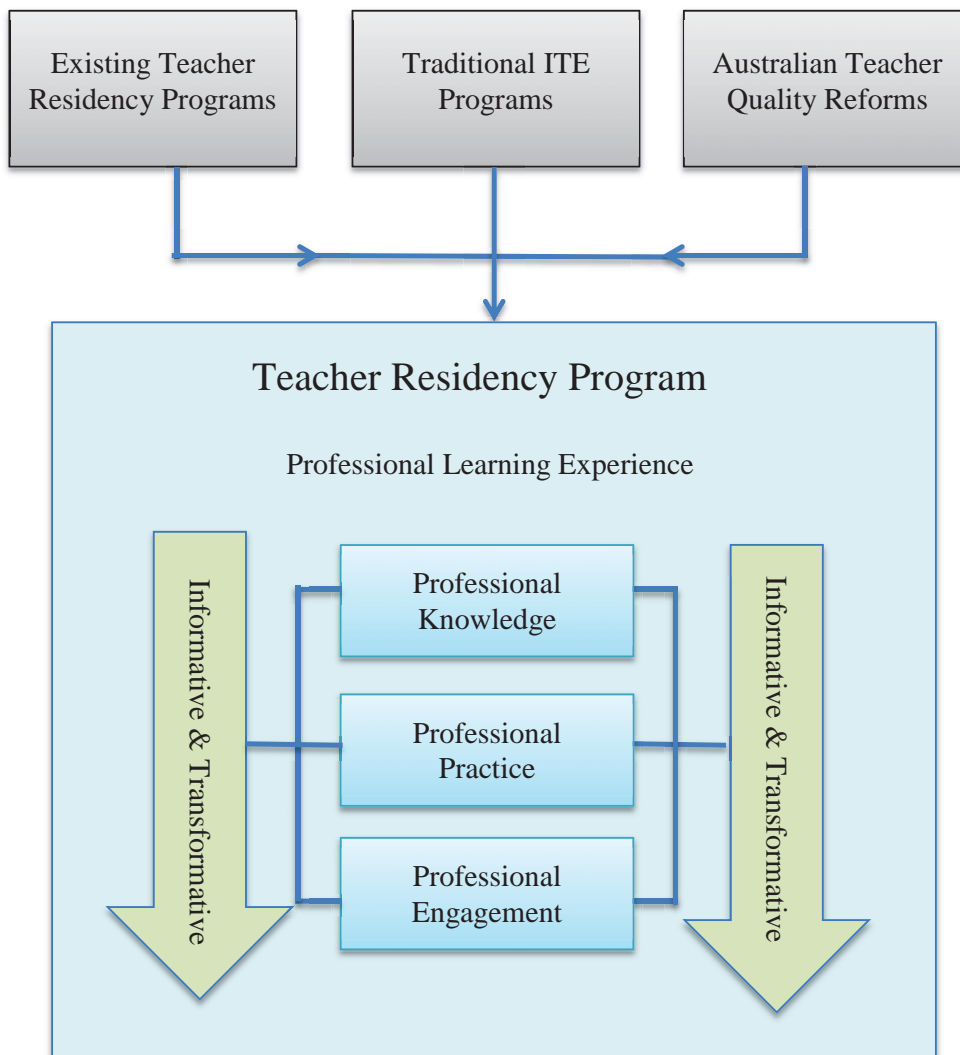


Figure 2.3: Theoretical framework

2.8 Summary

In this chapter the researcher has presented the relevant literature pertaining to the present study. She has provided a context for understanding the importance of exploring pre-service teachers' professional learning experiences in a teacher residency program. The literature review began with factors surrounding ITE, and recounted how teacher residency has evolved as an alternative pathway to ITE by responding to the concerns identified in existing traditional teacher education programs. The review further described how the Australian Teacher Quality reform movement has driven recent changes in ITE, producing a tendency to adopt clinical school-based approaches to the design and implementation of teacher education

programs. Finally, through reviewing literature on learning to teach and Mezirow's transformative learning theory, the reviewer has argued that learning to teach is a personally and professionally multifaceted process and has proposed that. Learning to teach may involve both informative and transformative learning outcomes. These learning outcomes are potentially influenced by the way the learners make sense of their experience while being engaged in various learning activities in their ITE programs.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents an account of the research methodology used in this study. It commences with a description of the research design and underlying rationale. This is followed with a detailed account of the implementation of the study, including participants, instruments, data collection procedures and methods of analyses. Issues of validity and reliability and ethics are then discussed, and the chapter concludes with a flowchart outlining the structural design of the study and a short summary.

The study was designed to examine residents' professional learning during the TRP, using a transformative learning paradigm. A mixed methods methodology was employed to determine:

- how the residents perceived their professional learning experience during the TRP;
- whether the residents' experiences evidenced a transformative learning process;
- what elements of the TRP contributed to or acted as barriers to the residents' professional learning.

The study has provided an opportunity to examine the learning experiences of residents during the TRP, in particular whether the school-placement and/or university course work components have exerted a transformative influence on their professional development.

3.2 Research Design and Rationale

In this section the researcher presents the rationale for the research design and an overview of the procedures that were used for collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting on the data.

The aim of this research was to provide a comprehensive account of the residents' experiences during the TRP. Such an account requires a holistic

understanding about the essence of residents' shared experiences of their learning to teach, the nature of their learning process and the influence of the programmatic elements of the TRP on the learning outcomes of the residents. Morse (1991) suggested that a mixed methods approach could provide the required holistic understanding and a more complete picture of the phenomenon. Mixed methods also reduce the problem of bias that is inherent in single method approaches and have the benefit of providing both deductive interpretation and inductive interpretation of the phenomenon being studied. The mixed methods design employed in this study provides quantitative evidence of the learning experiences of the residents as a cohort, and qualitative evidence of individualised learning experiences. The quantitative method has provided a view of the data collected from the resident cohort, and the qualitative method has provided an in-depth exploration of 12 individual residents.

In terms of the relationship between the quantitative and qualitative methods that were used concurrently in this study, the qualitative method was given priority. The quantitative method was embedded in the primary qualitative method. These relationships are demonstrated in Figure 3.1.

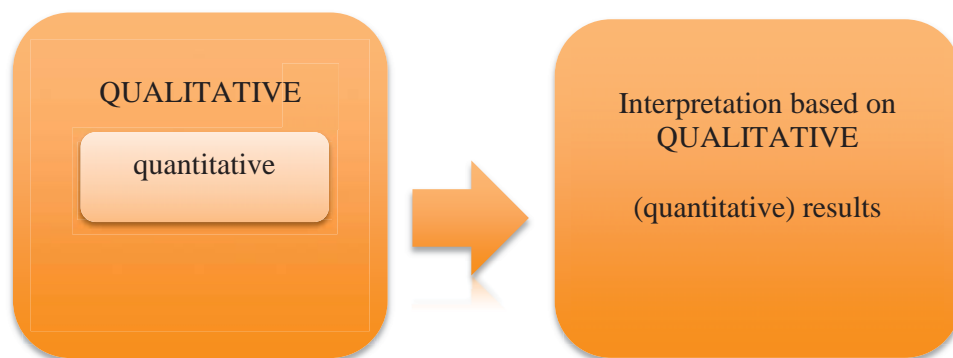


Figure 3.1: Visual presentation of the research design and relationship between qualitative and quantitative data sources. Source: Creswell and Clark (2007)

In terms of the timing and weighting of the quantitative and qualitative methods, and the mixing of collected data, this research was constructed as a concurrent nested design (Creswell, 2003) with the qualitative and quantitative methods being implemented concurrently. Relatively more weight was given to the qualitative approach over the quantitative approach, and the process for mixing the

two data sets resulted in the quantitative data being embedded within the larger qualitative data set. This is illustrated in Figure 3.2.

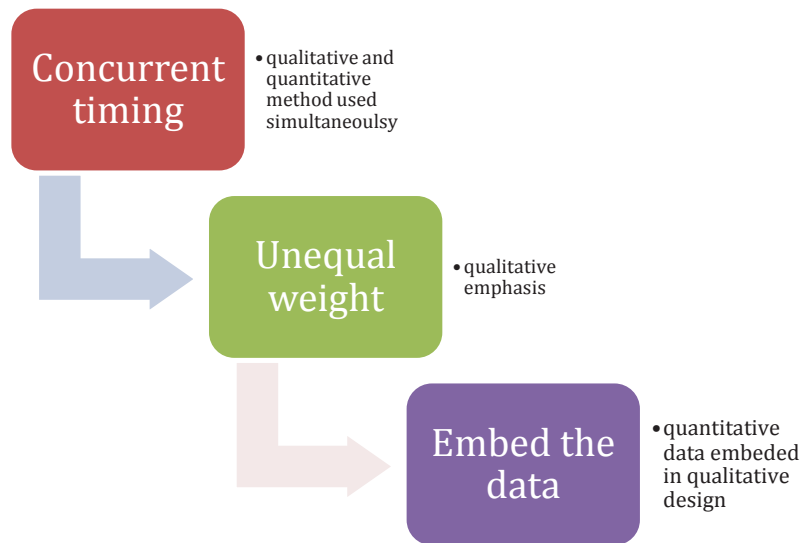


Figure 3.2: Timing, weighting and mixing of data source: (Creswell & Clark, 2007)

The quantitative portion of this mixed methods study involved a longitudinal survey design. The survey data about residents' professional learning experiences during the TRP were collected on two occasions during their year-long program of study. Qualitative data formed the primary source of information for the phenomenological research concerning the experiences of the residents during the TRP. These data were collected through the administration of interviews on four occasions with 12 residents.

Phenomenological inquiry is based on the assumption "there is an essence or essences to shared experiences", which are "the core meanings mutually understood through a phenomenon commonly experienced" (Patton, 1990, p. 70). Analysis and comparisons of people's lived experiences enabled the researcher to identify the essences of the phenomenon. The researcher employed phenomenological inquiry to examine residents' professional learning experiences during the TRP. The main focus of the interviews was to uncover the essence of the residents' shared experience using the lens of transformative learning theory, as they have learned to teach as students in TRP.

The quantitative survey design gathered data from the whole resident cohort to provide an overview of their views about their professional learning experiences

during the TRP. The qualitative phenomenological inquiry used case studies with a sample of residents to provide information about individual experiences in order to identify the essence of the elements of professional learning experiences afforded by the TRP. The case study data were collected using interviews at four stages during the TRP to provide an account of individual resident's experiences. As noted previously in this section, this primarily qualitative research design, has embedded the quantitative data to help enrich the description of the individual Resident's learning process (Morse, 1991).

Although a qualitative methodology forms a natural choice for exploring transformative learning, due to its constructivist nature, quantitative and qualitative paradigms have been used to provide a more robust account of the residents' experience during the TRP.

3.3 Research Procedures

3.3.1 Sample

The study sample comprised a cohort of 25 pre-service teachers who were enrolled in the primary stream of a one-year graduate teacher residency program conducted at a university in Western Australia. The TRP enrolled a total of 80 pre-service teachers across three streams: pre-primary, primary and secondary. All 25 participants from the primary stream were invited to take part in the study. This group was selected because it provided a more manageable study sample, and unlike the secondary cohort who was being prepared to teach across a range of discipline areas, the primary cohort undertook a uniform program of study.

Ethical procedures were used to select the study sample, to attain permission from the School of Education at the university, and to seek approval from the university ethics committee to survey the resident cohort. Individual informed consent was obtained from each participant prior to commencing the study. The surveys were distributed to the primary residents at the commencement and end of the TRP. A sample of 12 primary residents participated in four interviews, which were conducted during the course of the TRP. These 12 residents volunteered to participate in the interviews, and a number of them stated that they thought that their participation in the interviews would help them to reflect on their learning. It seemed

to the researcher that these students were highly motivated to enhance their learning experiences in the program.

All participants were adult learners who had previously earned a university degree in a discipline other than education. While some members of this cohort entered immediately from their first degree studies, most were career changers. The participants comprised seven males and five females and their age ranged from early twenties to early fifties, with the majority aged between twenty-five and thirty-five.

3.3.2 Data sources

As stated above, two sources of data were collected from the residents: interview transcripts and responses to surveys. The interview transcripts were considered as the primary data source for the research questions, which required an in-depth account of the residents' professional learning experiences during the TRP. The in-depth exploration of several individual accounts was needed to build up a picture of the residents' common elements of their experience of learning to teach during the TRP. As a secondary data source, survey responses were collected from the whole cohort of residents. This helped triangulate data collected through interviews, and also provided additional groundings to form inferences regarding the impact of different elements of the program.

3.3.2.1 Survey

The *survey of Professional Learning Experience* (See Appendix E) was designed to collect the primary resident cohort's perceptions of their professional learning experiences. The survey consisted of two parts. Part 1 comprised five questions, covering various demographic information including age, gender, and previous work experience – particularly any prior experience that involved teaching. Part 2 focused on the professional learning experiences of the residents during their TRP and comprised three sections, A, B and C.

Section A, in Part 2 of the survey asked the residents to rate the importance of different people for supporting their learning experience, and Section B asked them to rate the importance of various factors on their learning experience (See Appendix E). Residents were provided with a four-level rating scale for the questions in both sections (See Appendix E). A box for additional comments was also provided.

Section C comprised a series of questions that were designed to elicit information about how often the residents experienced certain learning incidents, which were derived from components of the theoretical model for transformative learning. Four options were provided to indicate frequency (See Appendix E). As with Sections A and B, the researcher provided an additional box for residents to make further, open-ended, comments.

The surveys of *Professional Learning Experience* were administered at the commencement and conclusion of the TRP to track changes of the residents' perceptions regarding their professional learning experiences. In order to obtain richer data, for the second administration the demographic section was replaced with three open-ended questions. The first question requested information about the extent to which the residents' views of teaching had changed as a result of the TRP. The second and third questions focused on residents' attitude towards the quality of their professional learning experiences and recommendations for changes to the program.

3.3.2.2 Interviews

The interview questions were designed to elicit the sample residents' macro and micro perspectives of their learning during the TRP. The macro-dimension was related to individual residents' learning experiences, while the micro-dimension was designed to determine whether these learning experiences evidenced a transformative learning process.

Four separate interview instruments were developed for the four interviews, which comprised 12, 13, 11 and 13 questions respectively. The framework for the interview questions was derived from the work of Mezirow (1991). The first interview focused on residents' views about teaching. Subsequent interviews were designed to map changes in resident's views about their learning. Thus, Interview 1 focused on residents' (pre)conceptions about teaching and learning, prior to their engagement in the school placement component of the TRP. The second interview sought information about the residents' impression of their early experiences in the TRP. The third and fourth interviews gathered further information about the residents' experiences and perceptions as they progressed through the course and approached the stage of being ready to leave and take up employment as a teacher.

The questions also sought how the residents felt about their professional learning at stages through the program and how they viewed themselves as a teacher.

3.3.3 Data collection

Figure 3.3 presents the timeline for the collection of the two concurrent data sets.

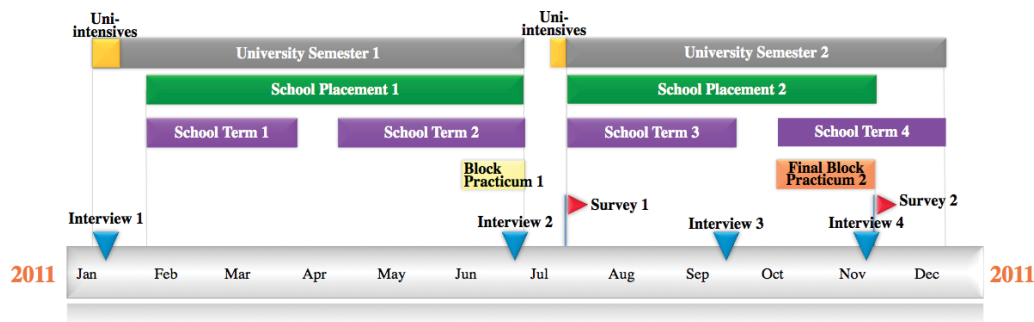


Figure 3.3: Timeline for qualitative and quantitative data collection

The first survey was conducted after the residents finished School Placement 1 and was administered on the first day of the university's semester 2. The second survey was administered at the end of the second school placement block, which concluded the year of study for the TRP. Twenty-five residents completed the first survey, and twenty-three completed the second. Both surveys were administered in the university lecture theatre where the residents attended their on-campus classes. Twenty-three surveys were used for basic analysis.

As shown in Figure 3.3, the interviews were conducted four times during the year by the researcher. Interview 1 was conducted early during the TRP, close to the end of the two-week university intensive, represented by the yellow colour block in Figure 3.3. The university intensive provided the residents with some preliminary education studies and prepared them for their first school placement. This first placement comprised a regular two-day per week component for 17 weeks and concluded with a five-day per week block placement for 4 weeks. Interview 2 was conducted at the end of the first placement, towards the end of the block placement. The third and fourth interviews were carried out in the middle of, and at the end of, the second school placement in the second and final semester of the TRP respectively. Like the first placement, the second school placement comprised a regular two-day per week component for 10 weeks and concluded with a full-time

five-day per week component for five weeks. The two placements were undertaken at different schools.

Twelve residents participated in the first three interviews. The residents were given a list of the interview questions before each interview so that they would have a clear understanding of what they were going to talk about with the researcher. The length of the interviews varied from 25 minutes to one hour, depending on the speaking speed of the participant, individual differences in responses to the questions, and the intensity and amount of discussion. All interviews were conducted by the researcher and audio-recorded.

3.3.4 Data analysis

3.3.4.1 *Analysis of survey data*

Before survey data were analysed to address the research questions, the researcher adopted Creswell's (2005), procedures for preparing and organising the data for analysis: scoring the data, creating a codebook, determining the code to use, and inputting the coded data into SPSS 18. After the preparation and organisation of the survey data, the researcher conducted descriptive statistics analysis in order to examine tendencies in the data regarding various aspects of residents' professional learning experiences.

3.3.4.2 *Analysis of interview data*

Interview data were analysed using the framework developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) for phenomenological research. Following this framework, the data analysis comprised three major phases: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Herbers, 1998). In the data reduction phase, all raw qualitative data were organised and reduced to manageable scale through the production of summaries and abstracts, coding and writing memos. In doing so, the researcher made data intelligible in terms of the phenomenon of learning to teach during the TRP ("Analyzing Qualitative Data," 2006). The data were then displayed to provide a collection of organised, compressed information from which the researcher identified features and drew relevant conclusions. Information at this level was presented in diagrams, charts, or a matrix of words, to identify systematic patterns and interrelationships. The final phase of data analysis involved the researcher generating the meaning of the analysed data and assessing their

implications for the three key research questions ("Analyzing Qualitative Data," 2006).

Applying Miles and Herbers (1998) framework, the researcher employed the following specific procedures for the analysis of interview data. After all the audio recordings of interviews were formatted, a preliminary exploratory analysis was carried out by the researcher. The researcher decided that verbatim transcription of all data was unnecessary. As an alternative, the researcher first listened to all the interview recordings once to obtain a general sense of the data as a whole. While listening, the researcher wrote memos in a separate sheet, which comprised the identification of relevant ideas and concepts. Then, to begin the coding process, the researcher listened for the second time to the interviews one by one, labelling the audio segments with codes, which were either the actual words of the Resident or phrased in standard educational terms (for example, statements like "*control the kids in the classroom*", "*manage the class*", "*handle different behaviours in the class*" were termed as "*classroom management*"). In doing so, the researcher selected specific data to code for common themes. This stage of coding culminated in the researcher producing a table summarising all the codes of each resident's response to each interview question. An example showing a segment of the table of codes for one resident is presented in Table 3.1.

The researcher then examined the table of codes for each interview question for the group of residents to identify overlap and redundancy. The collapsed and reduced codes provided a small number of shared-themes. The themes represented the pattern of residents' responses to each question, with the most frequently mentioned evidence cited to support them. Typically five to seven themes were produced from the codes of the 12 residents' responses to each interview question. To prepare for reporting the findings from the interview data analysis, the researcher listed in a table all of the themes for each question, and recorded the number, and percentage of participants mentioning each theme. Table 3.2 shows the themes derived from the participants' responses to the question: *what do you expect to learn from the TRP?*

Table 3.1: Example of Codes for Data

Motivation	Previous teaching experiences	Expectations	Prospective teacher	Ability to teach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - job security - learn by doing - practical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no teaching experiences - art therapy workshop for two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to be best prepared as possible - gain confidence and experiences - classroom and behaviour management - curriculum - instrumental tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organised - approachable - creative - conduct Interesting and engaging class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low level of confidence in lesson planning and classroom management

Table 3.2: Residents' Learning Expectations during the TRP

Expectations	Number of participants (N ₁)
classroom management	7
learn to be a good teacher	6
subject matters	4
gaining confidence	2
teaching skills and strategies	3
curriculum	2
programming and planning	2

3.3.4.3 Analysis of interview data for case studies

Two detailed case studies were established using the interview data collected from two residents who were interviewed four times each during the study. The researcher used the detailed analysis of these two case studies to address the second research question. The case studies were each selected as an exemplary representation of different learning paths and outcomes of the larger group of residents.

It should be noted that in this research project the researcher used the case study as a way of presenting qualitative data to address the research problem, rather

than as a method in traditional qualitative research design. The purpose of the two case studies was to describe the *particular cases* in detail. These cases were particularistic and contextual, and they provided representative accounts of learning responses to the TRP. The richness and depth of information offered by the case studies provides an illustrative description of a Resident's learning journey. Capturing as many variables as possible, these two case studies identified how a complex set of circumstances during the TRP came together to produce a particular manifestation of learning to teach.

3.3.4.4 *Four-staged transformative framework for analysis*

In this study residents' self-reported learning experiences were classified as either informative or transformative. The framework adopted for the analysis of the data from the two case studies was based on a review of studies of transformative learning that indicated the evidence should lead to the development of a common pattern, or process leading to a transformative learning outcome. The analysis was guided by the four-stage transformative framework, which is described below. The framework was employed to determine whether or not the resident's professional learning experiences during the TRP demonstrated the characteristics of a transformative learning process. The four stage transformative framework represents a distillation of the early work of Mezirow (1991), who identified ten phases that characterise how an individual experiences the process of transformative learning. The phases start from a *disorienting dilemma* and move through to *critical self-examination*, *exploration of new possibilities of new roles, relationships and actions*, *provisional trying of new roles, building of self-confidence in new roles* and finally *integrating changes into one's life*. Herbers (1998) later condensed Mezirow's ten phases into four: a *disorienting dilemma*, *critical reflection*, *rational discourse* and *action*. Herbers's distillation of Mezirow's ten phases also have parallels in Cranton's (1994) four-staged "*Learner Empowerment*" of transformative learning and King's (2002) four-staged journey of transformation. It also resonates with Larrivee's (2000) three-fold structure for understanding the development of a critically reflective teacher. According to Glisczinski (2005, p. 40), what these studies had in common were trends that pointed to a consistent "process of action, critical reflection, and renewed action, which is informed, reformed, tempered, and redirected by experiences and expanding awareness".

Table 3.3 presents a summary of the terms and description used by these researchers. Drawing on these studies, the researcher has adopted a framework that emphasises a four-staged development process to examine the transformative learning experiences of pre-service teachers. The terms and concepts developed by Mezirow (1990) and summarised in Table 3.3 were retained for the analysis procedure and were used in subsequent analysis and discussions presented in Chapters Five and Six.

Guided by this four stage transformative learning framework, the researcher screened the interview data, and each of the two case studies for evidence of these stages. The framework provided a guideline for determining whether, and to what extent, the professional learning experiences of the participants demonstrated perspective or action change, that is, whether the residents' attitudes about learning and teaching changed, or not (perspective transformation-attitudes, beliefs and understandings), and whether their approaches to learning and teaching changed (action transformation-behaviour practice).

Table 3.3: Transformative Learning Framework

Stage	Herbers (1998)	Cranton (1994)	King (2002)	Mezirow (1991)
1	Disorienting dilemma	Initial learner empowerment	Fear and uncertainty	1. A disorienting dilemma 2. Self- examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt or shame
2	Critical reflection	Learner critical self-reflection	Testing and exploring	3. A critical assessment of assumptions 4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared 5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships and actions
3	Rational discourse	Transformative learning	Affirming and connecting	6. Planning a course of action 7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans 8. Provisional trying of new roles 9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
4	Action	Increased empowerment and autonomy	New perspectives	10. Reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective

3.4 Validity and Reliability

Given that the data in this study were collected by survey and interviews, procedures for checking on, or enhancing, validity and reliability of both the components were established.

3.4.1 Reliability of survey instrument

As internal consistency is an important factor for the reliability of instruments and their components in social science research, the researcher relied on Cronbach's (1951) Coefficient Alpha to ensure the survey used was internally consistent. Cronbach's Alpha has been considered the most common measure of internal consistency ("*reliability*"), particularly for the type of survey used in the present study, which employed multiple Likert questions that form a scale. Cronbach's Alpha provides a measure of the reliability of the scale with a higher score indicating better reliability of the scale. Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.650, an

acceptable reliability coefficient in social science research situations, was used as a reference point in the test described below.

A total of 75 variables in the dataset for the two surveys were established in SPSS. Other than variable 1 ID, eight variables represented the demographic questions in survey 1. Sixty-six variables represented questions in the professional learning experience section in both survey 1 and 2. Question 4 in section B (Part 2 in survey 1 and Part 1 in survey 2) “*How important is the three-way meeting with your mentor teacher and site director to your professional learning experiences in the Teacher Residency Program?*” was not included in the dataset, because complete responses to the question were not recorded. According to post-survey investigation, the majority of the residents reported that the three-way meeting did not eventuate even though it was considered as one of the key elements of the TRP. Arguably, the absence of this question did not affect the validity of the overall survey.

Excluding the eight demographic variables, which are irrelevant to the reliability of the survey scale, a reliability analysis was run in SPSS on the 66 variables in the dataset to calculate Cronbach’s Alpha for the survey instruments. The Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient obtained was 0.841 for the 66 questions analysed, which was higher than the generally accepted coefficient 0.650. This suggests the survey scale had high internal consistency and the surveys used in the study were reliable.

Content Validity of Instruments

To obtain valid results, the research instruments were examined by academics who were experienced in pre-service teacher education research. The validation process involved active conversations between the researcher and the academics. The researcher finalised the content of the instruments only when these academics approved all the items and questions in the instruments and were convinced that “the total number of items is an adequate representation of the domain of content covered by the variables being measured” (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2013, p. 91). The researcher also made sure the formats of the instrument were appropriate, including the clarity of printing, font size, and appropriateness of the terms and language used.

3.4.2 Trustworthiness and generalisability of the research findings

Hesse-Biber (2010) suggested that for a qualitative approach to mixed methods study, validation processes need to centre on having the correct mixed methods design and the right method elements. To enhance validity and reliability for this study, the researcher checked to make sure the problem and the methods were well “linked”, and that the method provided a “goodness of fit” to answer the research questions (p. 87). The researcher also maintained ongoing research dialogues across the research process with the stakeholders of the study regarding the fit between the problem and the method (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The mixed methods design was chosen for this study to provide multi-level of evidence to address each of the three different research questions. The mixed methods design also helped triangulate the interview data with the survey data. In the data analysis stage, the results of both methods were juxtaposed weaving a rich and complex story of learning to teach. Such a triangulation process enhanced the possibility of attaining accurate and credible findings.

Given that the study was a primarily qualitative inquiry, the results did not provide the same generalisability as in most scientific research in which the results could be directly replicated through creating identical circumstances. However, this study has produced evidence of the essence of a program’s process of learning to teach and its common characteristics of professional development, which can be compared with other similar pre-service teacher education settings.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Prior to the commencement of this study, ethical clearance was gained from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the university. Informed consent for participation in the study was obtained from all the participants. Before signing the informed consent form, each participant was provided with an information letter, which explained in clear and plain language the nature of research project, what the participants were expected to do and measures for protecting their privacy and confidentiality. (See Appendix H)

Involvement in the research project was voluntary, and participants had the right to withdraw from the research at any time without consequences. To achieve anonymity and confidentiality, the researcher removed any identification of

participants from the data collected. To preserve confidentiality, the researcher gave participants who were interviewed pseudonyms. The data were stored securely in a locked cabinet in researcher's office or in password protected computers accessible only to the researcher.

3.6 The Structural Design of the Study

This mixed methods research utilised two sources of data to address the three research questions, which have framed the study. Because the emphasis of each research question varied, consideration was given to determine whether the interview data or the survey data, or a combination of both, was to be used to address the respective question. The researcher also paid attention to how the findings of research questions were related. Figure 3.4 provides a visual presentation of the structural design of the study.

RQ1. What perceptions do pre-service teachers have about their professional learning experiences during the TRP?

To address the first research question, the qualitative interview data (N=12) were examined to establish the residents' perceptions about their professional learning and identity. These data are presented in Chapter Four. Data about resident's perceptions of their professional learning were drawn from the interview questions, shown in Appendix A to Appendix D that were developed to gauge elements of learning that reflected the WACOT Standards.

Additional questions about how the residents' felt about their experiences were included to gauge the nature of their positive and negative learning experiences, and the impact that these experiences had on their views of teaching. Residents' perceptions of their professional identity as a teacher were developed from data about their views of being a teacher, sense of belonging to the school community, the teaching profession, and their confidence to teach.

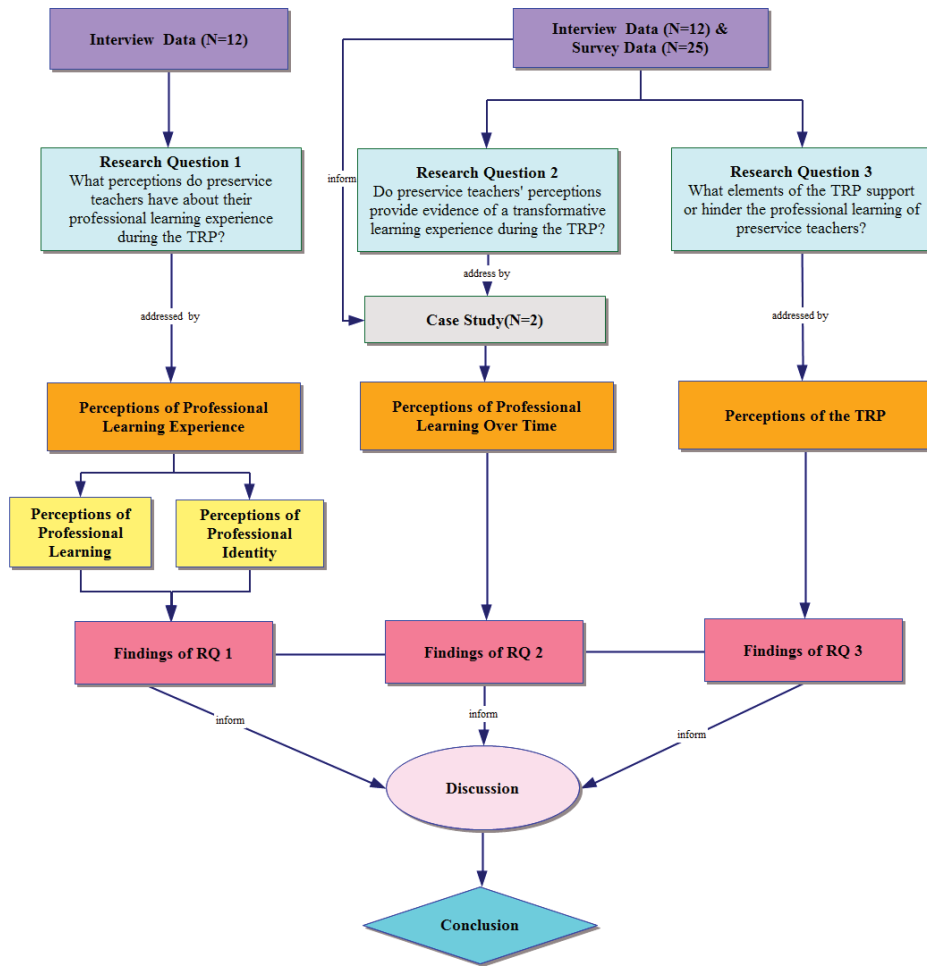


Figure 3.4 Structural design

RQ2. Do pre-service teachers' perceptions provide evidence of a transformative learning experience during the TRP?

The case studies, which are presented in Chapter Five, yield a personal dimension to residents' accounts of their experiences of the TRP. The case studies demonstrate how individual differences influence the residents' perceptions regarding professional learning. Interview data of two residents were analysed to determine whether their experiences provided evidence of a transformative learning process. Residents' descriptions of learning experiences in the case studies were probed for evidence of changes in their attitudes and approaches to learning and teaching. The survey data related to resident cohort's (N=25) overall judgments on their learning experiences against the transformative learning paradigm was used to

triangulate the interview data in order to seek more evidence of residents' experiencing transformative learning during the TRP.

RQ3. What elements of the TRP support or hinder the professional learning of pre-service teachers?

This question, which is addressed in Chapter Six, focuses on the elements of the Teacher Residency Program, that the residents perceived as supportive or hindering to their professional learning. Both sets of data related to residents' responses to the TRP were examined to generate findings. The survey provided quantitative data about residents' perceptions of the influences of stakeholders and other elements of the TRP on aspects of their learning experiences. Interview responses also offered information about whether residents believed their expectations to learn from the TRP had been met at the end of the program, what they thought about the quality of their learning experiences in the program, and what changes they thought were needed to enhance the program. Due to the overarching nature of this question, data were drawn from the collective results of the interview and survey, and from synthesized evidence collated from the first two research questions.

Based on results presented in Chapters Four, Five and Six, a general discussion is presented in Chapter Seven. The discussion section renders the researcher's interpretation of the meaning of the findings in relation to each of the research questions. The results are also examined critically in light of pertinent literature on the professional development of pre-service teachers.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter the researcher has presented an overview of research design used for this study, and established a rationale for the implementation of this program of research. It has also outlined the procedures for conducting the research, which include details of the participants, the survey and interview procedures, the data collection process and how both sets of data were analysed to yield research findings. It has been reported that the instruments used were reliable and had undergone a validation process. It has established that the combination of data helped enhance the accuracy and credibility of the findings and such findings. The

degree to which the findings are externally generalisable to other similar education settings will be examined in Chapter Eight. After elaborating that the research was conducted in an ethical manner, the researcher concluded that different elements were brought together to make a cohesive design to address three research questions, and the researcher also briefly outlined the structure of the remaining chapters of this thesis.

CHAPTER 4:

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents results from the analysis of interview data and addresses the first research question: *What perceptions do pre-service teachers have about their professional learning experiences during the TRP?* The answer to this question is comprised of two aspects: one being the residents' perceptions of their professional learning that occurred in the course of the TRP, and the perceptions of their professional identity as a result of their experiences during the TRP.

Structurally, this chapter contains the data about the residents' professional learning in two sections. Section 4.2 provides a profile of the 12 residents who participated in the series of interviews. This section includes residents' background and an analysis of the data that were obtained from interviews 1, 2, 3 and 4. The residents' responses from each of these interviews have been mapped against the Western Australian Professional Standards for Teaching (WACOT, 2009), thus the data have then been transformed into quantitative evidence to identify the change in learning that occurred in their professional learning over the course of the TRP. The information depicts the residents' views on: what they had achieved in their professional learning; what aspects of the TRP had been helpful or unhelpful in their growth as a beginning teacher, and their views on how these experiences impacted on their perceptions of teaching.

Section 4.3 comprises the second set of data, specifically about the residents' perceptions of their professional identity. This section includes an analysis of data collected from interviews 1, 2, 3 and 4. The data have been analysed to reveal how the residents' professional identity development was affected by their experiences during the program. These data include: residents' views about being a teacher; their sense of belonging to their placement schools and to the teaching profession; and their confidence in their ability to teach. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the key findings about residents' perceptions of their overall learning experience during the TRP.

4.2 Residents' Professional Learning in the TRP

4.2.1 Background information

All 12 residents interviewed were adult learners varying in age from early twenties to mid-fifties. The residents' educational and professional backgrounds roughly fell into three categories: the first (N=4) were recent undergraduates with no, or limited, teaching experience; the second (N=5) were mature-aged career changers; and the third (N=3) mature-aged employees who had been working in the education sector. A summary of the demographic information of the 12 residents is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Demographic Information

Demographics	Details (N=12)
Age	20-29 (N=5) 30-39 (N=4) 40+ (N=3)
Gender	male (N=6) female (N=6)
Teaching Experience (TE)	more than ten years of classroom TE (N=3) more than three years of sport or dance TE (N=4) limited teaching experience (N=2) none (N=3)
Field of work	teaching (N=3) nursing or aged care (N=2) sport management (N=1) vocational training (N=1) environmental industries (N=1) recent graduate (N=4)

4.2.2 Residents' account of their professional learning

To provide a descriptive account of the residents' professional learning, data were transcribed and residents' comments were categorised against elements of the professional standards. As outlined in Chapter Three the comments were reduced and categorised using the WACOT Professional Standards for Teaching for the three domains of professional knowledge (PK), professional practice (PP), and professional engagement (PE). Comments were further coded into elements of each of three professional domains using key words from each of the nine standards. The data were then grouped into four categories to indicate whether the residents had identified these learning experiences as having: enabled them to learn or master a characteristic professional attribute; been good or beneficial; been poor or unhelpful, or had changed their view about teaching. The categorising was more for convenience than thematic significance with the four categories corresponding to the

first four questions in interviews 2, 3 and 4. These four questions yielded in-depth responses regarding the residents' learning experience during the TRP. For easier reference, these categories were given the respective titles of Achievement (what residents had learned at various stages of the TRP), LE Exp+ (positive learning experiences residents had that contributed to their professional development), LE Exp- (struggles that residents encountered, hindering their professional development) and impact (how learning experiences changed residents' views of teaching).

From these four categories, a total of 273 comments were collated from the responses of 12 residents for each professional domain and standard. Figures 4.1 to 4.3 provide a quantitative depiction of the overall distribution of the 273 comments across the categories, domains of learning, and series of interviews

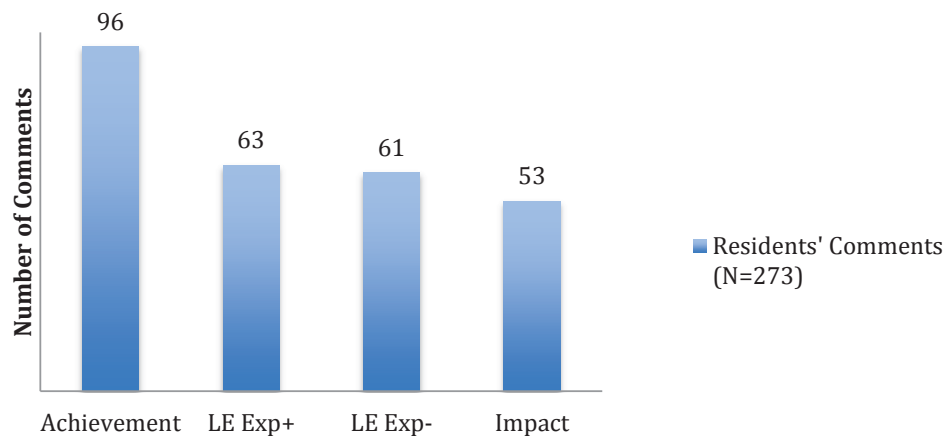


Figure 4.1: Residents' comments on their professional learning during the TRP

Figure 4.1 indicates that the residents had a strong sense of achievement, but had commented less often on the impact of the program on their learning and their learning experiences were thought to have been equally positive and negative.

Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of collated comments at each interview for each type of response. The number of responses were relatively evenly distributed across the three interviews, there were more comments related to Achievement in interview 4 and LE Exp- comments featured more in interview 3. LE Exp+ and Impact comments were the highest in interview 2. This pattern of responses indicates a preponderance of positive feelings and sense of impact on learning at the commencement of the program. Negative responses emerged more strongly in the

middle of the program, whereas the sense of achievement emerged more strongly toward the end of the program.

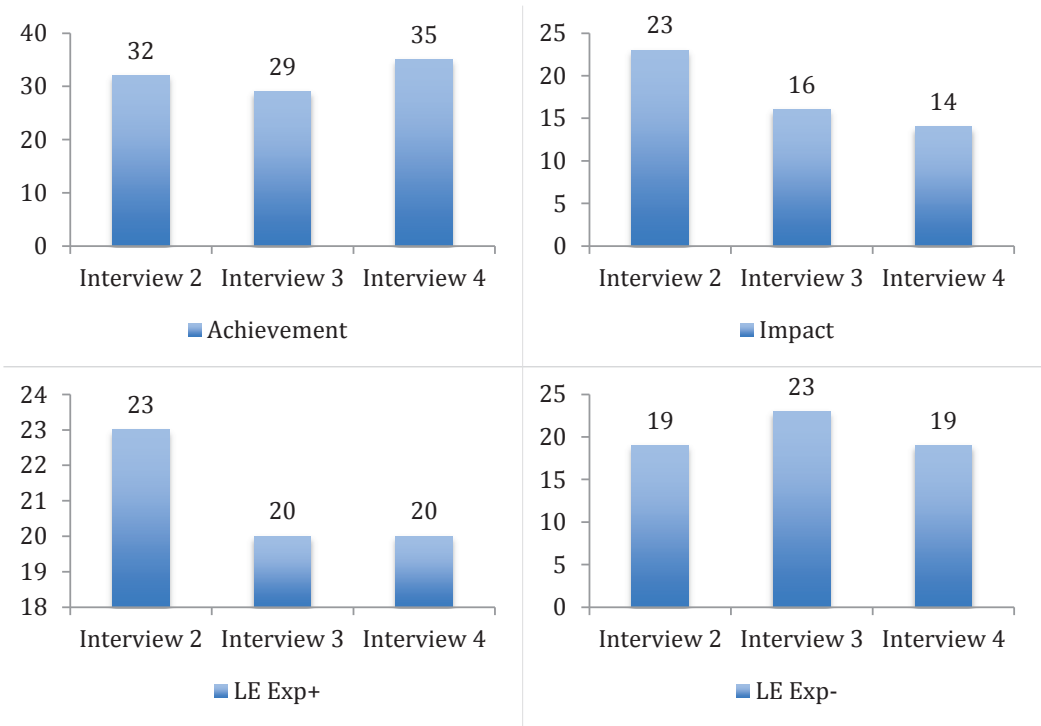


Figure 4.2: Residents’ comments on their professional learning experiences at interview 2, 3 and 4

Figure 4.3 offers a quantitative overview of the distribution of the collated comments across the three professional domains of learning stipulated in the Western Australian Professional Standards for Teaching. The results suggest the residents found that their experiences in the program had supported their achievement across all elements of the professional standards. Of the 96 achievement related responses, 33 concerned Professional Knowledge (PK), 47 Professional Practice (PP) and 16 were related to Professional Engagement (PE). The levels of LE Exp+ and LE Exp- and Impact were high for Professional Engagement, moderate for Professional Practice and lowest for Professional Knowledge. These results suggest the residents judged their learning to be more about Professional Engagement and Professional Practice than about Professional Knowledge.

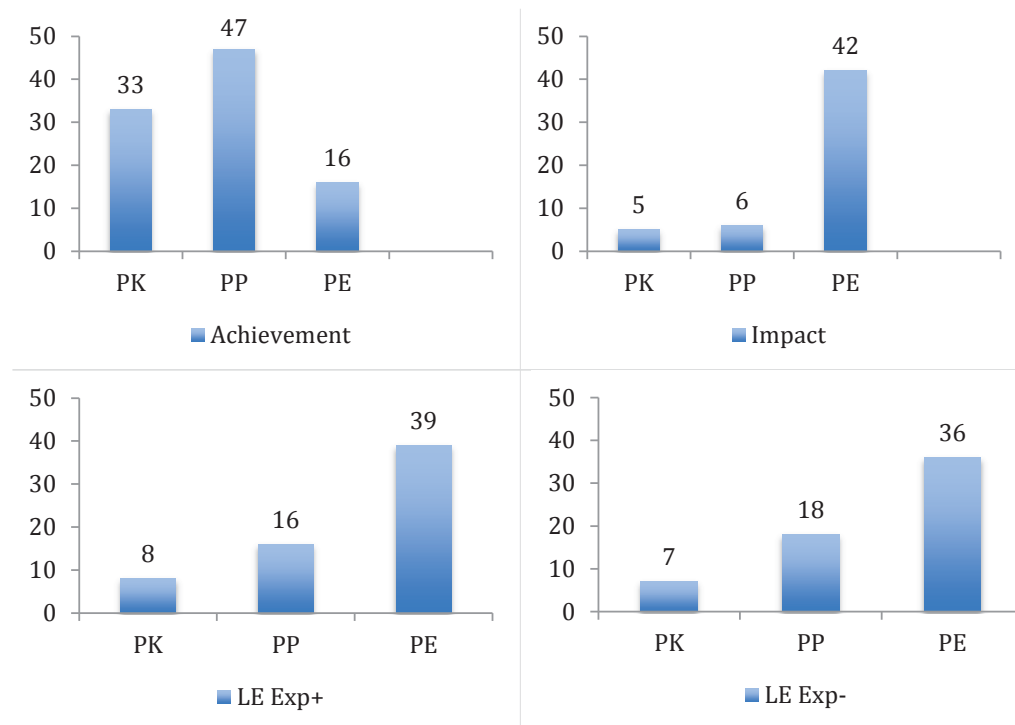


Figure 4.3: Resident's comments on professional learning experiences related to the domains of Professional Standards for Teaching

In terms of residents' professional learning experiences, it is important to understand how their learning unfolded at different stages of their one-year program and in what domains of learning that learning occurred. In the following sections data were further interrogated to reveal patterns of learning for Achievement, LE Exp+, LE Exp- and Impact for each of the three professional domains. Data were quantified and presented in the form of graphs. In these graphs the percentage of comments are recorded for each interview to show changes of learning focus for Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement in each of the four categories. It should be noted that in some graphs, the number of comments is relatively small, (i.e. the "N" values are very low). Nevertheless, these graphs are retained because the small number of comments was still important in interpreting residents' perceptions of their learning.

4.2.3 Residents' perception of their achievement in the TRP

Comments about residents' perceptions of achievement were derived from the first question in each interview. For interview 2 this question was "*What are the most important things you have learned about being a teacher since the beginning of*

the TRP?” The question was modified in interview 3 to, “*Are there any new things you have learned about being a teacher since you began your second placement?*” and in interview 4 to, “*What new did you learn about being teaching during your 5-week block placement?*”

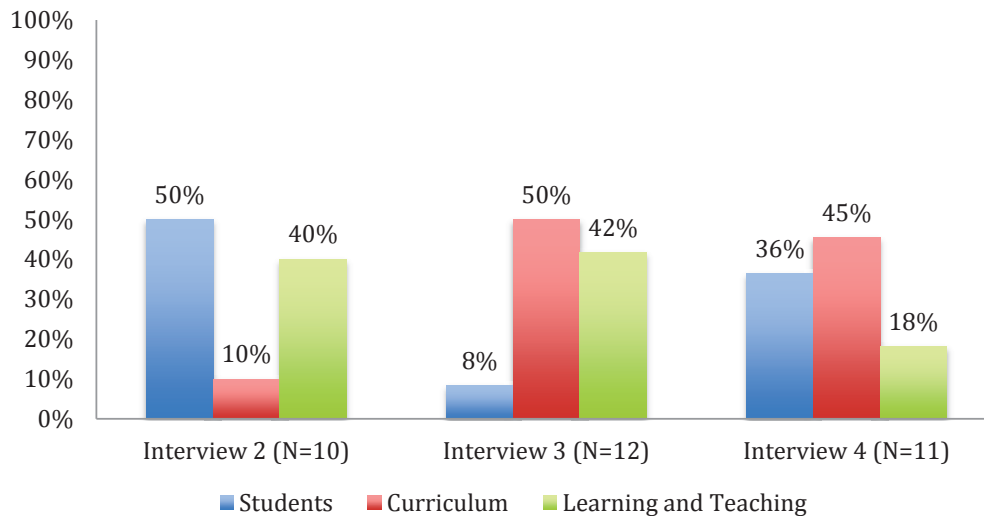


Figure 4.4: Achievement and Professional Knowledge

It is interesting to notice in Figure 4.4 that in interview 2, 50% of the comments were focused on students, 40% on learning and teaching, and only 10% were about curriculum. However, this pattern was reversed for students and curriculum in interview 3 with comments about curriculum accounting for 50% of the responses, whereas comments related to students accounted for only 8% of the responses. The proportion of comments about learning and teaching in interview 3 appeared to be similar to interview 2. By interview 4, the issues related to achievement were more equally focused on Students and Curriculum, with 36% and 45% respectively; however, comments about Learning and Teaching went down to 18%. This pattern of responses suggests residents’ attention in the first semester of their program was drawn to issues concerning students, their ways of learning and resident’ teaching of them. Residents’ attention then switched more to the area of curriculum toward the middle of the TRP, and as the year progressed, their sense of achievement was more evenly related to learning about students and curriculum.

In interview 2, residents’ responses about student-related issues included building rapport with students, dealing with students individually, and establishing personal boundaries when interacting with them. This was captured by James who

stated, *“Probably the most important things I 've learnt are ways to try to improve their behaviour.... it is not really classroom management, it's rather dealing with the children as individuals, and having strategies for dealing with them. And I guess the importance of developing a good rapport with them”*. Residents’ comments on achievement in interview 2 about how students learn and how to teach them were focused on: how to achieve the purpose of the lesson through appropriate activities; how to use appropriate instruction skills; how to be prepared for unexpected circumstances, and how to be flexible.

A shift in residents’ focus during the second semester to students’ learning needs was evident in the comment from John in interview 3. He said, *“... [I am] more open to adjusting to different levels,...[specifically] ... the level that is needed for different year group”*. Ben went further and suggested he was now able to identify differences across year levels, saying, *“I’ve learned a lot about year-ones, realising the difference between year levels”*. Comments about achievement in Learning and Teaching were mostly related to the residents’ capacity to adopt different teaching styles to meet the needs of different year-levels, and adjust lessons to meet the individual needs of students in the same class. For instance, Stella said, *“...I've gone to the upper primary and seen the big difference, just learning to cope with that sort of thing [sic], not really anything stands out too much other than just the ways it is taught, how to interact with the kids, and the different methods you have to use to teach”*.

By interview 4, at the end of the year of study, the residents appeared to be deepening their knowledge of managing students with learning difficulties. For example, at this stage William said, *“There were some students in the classroom who did have some learning difficulties...the new thing is to pay more attention to that in my planning, accommodating their special needs, and facilitating them...”*.

Residents’ responses related to achievement in the domain of Professional Practice presented in Figure 4.5. These responses were classified according to the three areas from the professional standards, namely, Teaching Practice, Learning Environment, and Planning and Assessment.

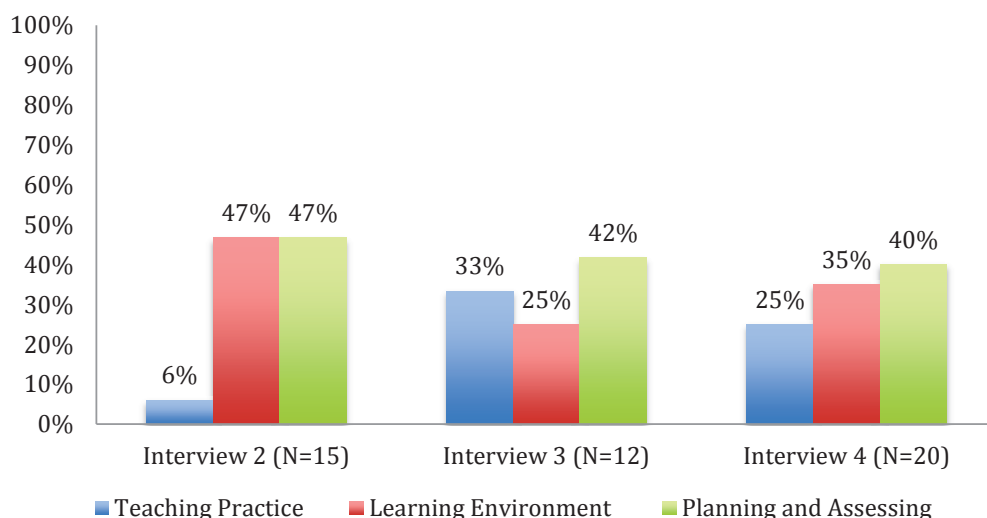


Figure 4.5 Achievement and Professional Practice

A total of 47 comments about achievement were related to Professional Practice. (see Figure 4.3) As shown in Figure 4.5, the pattern of these responses suggest that residents' learning early in the program was focused on issues about managing the learning environment and planning more than about how to teach or the practice of teaching. This is particularly evident in interview 2, when only 6% of the comments concerned teaching practice, whereas 47% each were related to Planning and Assessment and Learning Environment.

In interview 2, comments about Planning and Assessing indicated residents were learning to be organised and detailed in lesson planning, and they were learning how to plan lessons at students' appropriate level. Comments about the area of Learning Environment were mostly related to behaviour management. Residents' comments about behaviour management were typically short and firm. For instance, Grace stated that, "*The most important thing I have learnt is getting on top of the behaviour management*". Creating and maintaining a positive learning environment and managing student behaviour in the classroom appeared to occupy the residents' attention throughout the TRP. However, residents' comments about Teaching Practice were very low at only 6%, and creating an engaging lesson was the only item related to achievement and Teaching Practice in interview 2.

In interview 3 residents' comments about achievement in Teaching Practice were stronger, with 33% of comments related to issues such as the benefits of doing a sequence of lessons, importance of creating engaging lessons, and being able to

make informed decisions based on the “live” circumstances of the classroom. Residents’ perceived growth in Teaching Practice was linked to the other two elements of Professional Practice: achievement in Planning and Assessing and Learning Environment amounting to 42% and 25% of comments respectively.

By interview 4, residents had become much more focused on organisational elements of the classroom. At this stage they reported two major areas of achievement: Planning and Assessment (40%) and Learning Environment (35%). Resident’s comments about Planning and Assessing included their ability to be flexible and well prepared, and to plan a lesson based on the curriculum and being able to keep records of student progress. In the area of learning environment, residents identified achievement in comments about their ability to clarify expectations of students, to adapt to interruptions in the classroom, to reward good behaviours, and to deal with severe behaviour problems. For example, James said, *“The most important thing I learned was to make sure that the students know exactly what is expected of them all the time”*.

Residents’ expression of achievement for teaching practice was weaker in interview 4 than for Learning Environment and Planning and Assessing, which accounted for 25% of the comments. This suggests that towards the end of the program the residents’ comments focused more on the processes that supported their teaching more than their actual performance of teaching. This indicates that the residents were engaged in a professional study about teaching and that their teaching practice was being developed through professional understandings of teachers’ work.

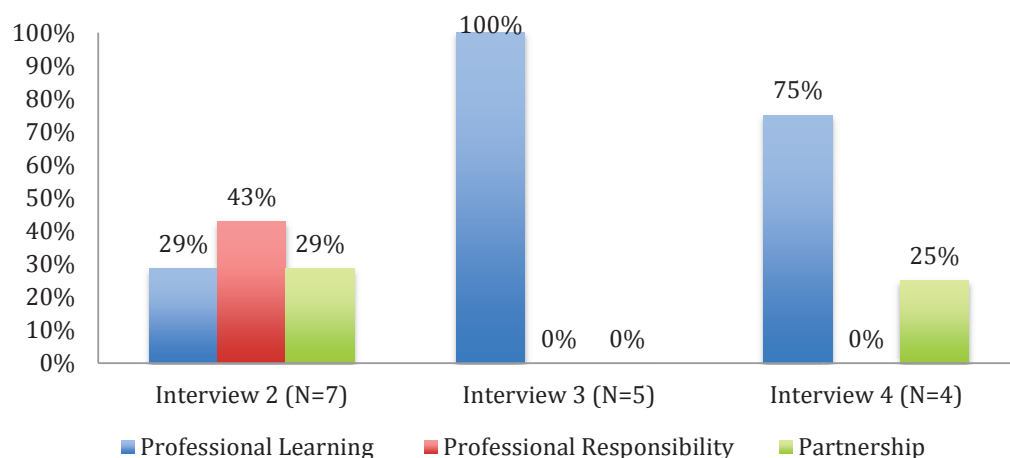


Figure 4.6: Achievement and Professional Engagement

Figure 4.6 illustrates residents' sense of achievement in the domain of Professional Engagement. Only 16 responses (see Figure 4.3) referred to the Professional Engagement domain, which indicates that residents' sense of achievement was relatively low. Moreover, the number of Professional Engagement comments diminished as the program unfolded: of the 16 responses, seven occurred in interview 2, five in interview 3, and four in interview 4.

In interview 2 residents' comments comprised each of the three standards-based aspects of professional learning (29%), professional responsibility (43%), and partnerships (29%). For example, Jack's comment illustrates his attention to professional responsibility, "*Another important thing I've learnt is how to use DOT (duties other than teaching) times*". Some residents were very mindful of the need to establish a strong partnership with their mentor and the wider school community. For example, William in interview 2 stated, "*Maintaining quite a detailed communication channel with your mentor [is] especially [important]. You know the communication between myself and my mentor has been vital to making sure that I am planning lessons ahead of time. Because there have been a lot of thoughts going into forward planning – what is going on for next week. Without those discussions it is pretty impossible to know what you are meant to be doing in the classroom. And also on top of that, talking to other teachers, getting resources, and getting ideas from other people have been pretty important*".

By interview 3, the focus was solely on Professional Learning. Residents' comments suggested that by this time they had developed a better understanding of their own professional learning. Some of the comments suggested this development had occurred through their exposure to two different year levels in the first and second placement, helping them to gauge their ability to teach to different year levels and to make adjustments to address individual needs. The opportunity to see different school systems in operation and the distinctive culture and mechanisms of those schools was also mentioned as being important. By interview 4, residents' comments about Professional Learning had dropped to 19%, and 6% of the comments were related to Partnerships.

The pattern of responses for achievement in the domain of Professional Engagement suggests that during the first semester the residents were focused on learning the elements of the professional engagement domain and that as they

progressed into semester 2 of the TRP their focus of their achievement was more strongly related to being a professional member of the teaching team.

4.2.4 Residents' account of their positive learning experiences in the TRP

Comments about the residents' positive learning experiences were derived from the second question of each interview. For interview 2 this question was "*What positive learning experiences have you had during this period?*" This was modified in interview 3 to, "*What further positive learning experiences have you had during this period?*" and in interview 4 to, "*What further positive learning experiences have you had since our last interview?*" Residents' responses to these questions were typically framed by situations in which they had learned something substantial, and had experienced positive outcomes.

Sixty-three out of the total 273 positive comments (see Figure 4.1) focused on residents' association with their professional learning. Similar to their sense of achievement, these responses were distributed evenly across each set of interviews, with 23 comments in interview 2, 16 in interview 3 and 14 in interview 4 (see Figure 4.2). This spread indicates that the residents had had positive learning experiences at all stages of their program. Of the 63 comments related to positive learning experiences, eight concerned Professional Knowledge, 16 Professional Practice, and 39 Professional Engagement (see Figure 4.3). This pattern of responses suggests the major focus of their positive learning experiences were on being as a teaching professional.

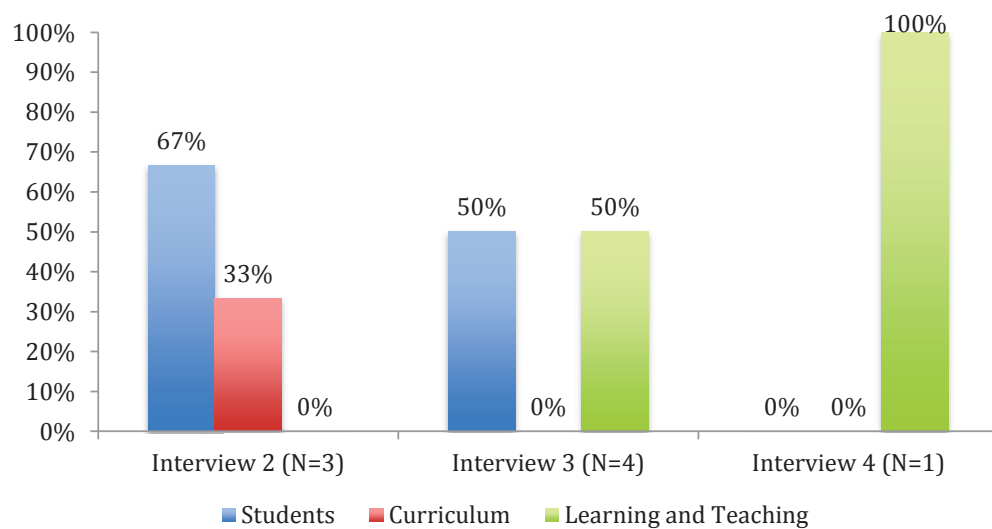


Figure 4.7: Positive learning experiences and Professional Knowledge

In the domain of Professional Knowledge, there were only eight comments about positive learning experiences, with reference to aspects of students, curriculum, and how students learn and how to teach them. In interview 4, the only positive experience reported was about learning and teaching. The comments related to positive experiences with students in interview 2 and 3 were about establishing rapport with students and forming a bond with them. For example, in interview 2 Stella talked about building relationship with a child with anger management issues. She said, “*It was beneficial knowing that I’ve put the work into the relationship; I set the boundaries for him, because he is someone who really needs it, but then from that we’ve got this respect. I think that is the most important thing I have seen*”.

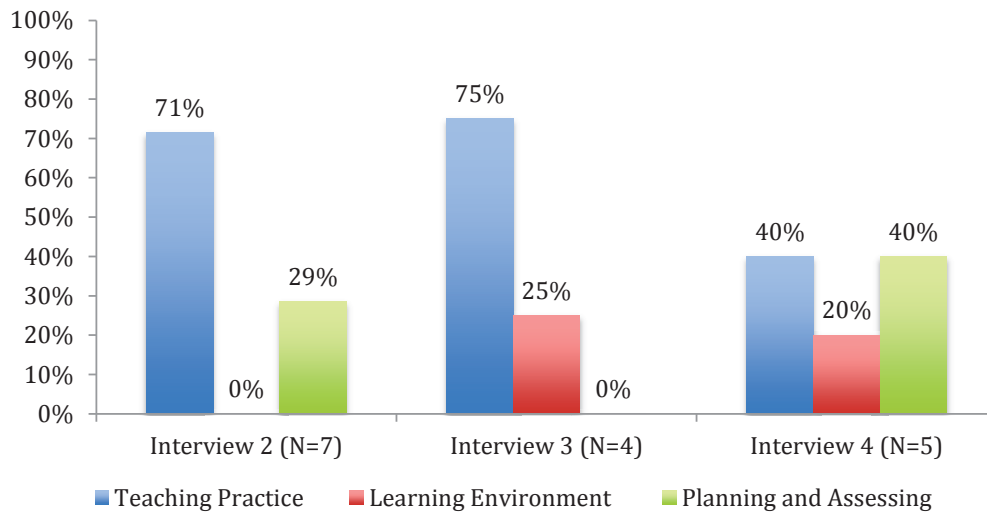


Figure 4.8: Positive learning experiences and Professional Practice

The pattern of responses for positive learning experiences in the domain of Professional Practice suggests that teaching practice was an area in which residents felt the most growth. Comments for this aspect of Professional Practice accounted for 71% and 75% of the comments in interviews 2 and 3, dropping to 40% in interview 4. In contrast, comments about Learning Environment, and Planning and Assessing accounted for a smaller percentage of comments in the three interviews.

In interview 2, residents’ comments about their positive feelings in teaching practice referred to their overall achievement of good learning outcomes and being able to see learning happening in the classroom. For example, William commented, “*One of the positive learning experiences would be really seeing the students learning something, and seeing the ah-huh moments*”. Residents who had been able

to hone their teaching skills also reported positive feelings, and residents said they felt satisfied when they were able to do explicit teaching, improve the sequencing of lessons, and adjust the program as needed and create interactive lessons to engage students. Towards the end of the program, residents' positive feelings emerged about their ability to handle teaching as a whole. For example, in interview 4 James said, "...being able to think on my feet and recognise something I was doing wrong and needed remedying being able to respond to it".

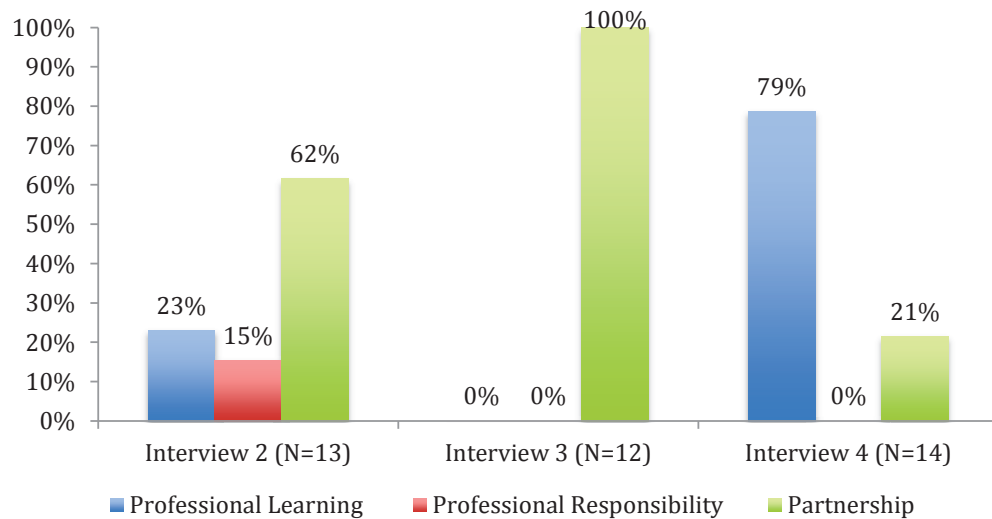


Figure 4.9: Positive learning experiences and Professional Engagement

The pattern of responses for positive learning experiences in the domain of Professional Engagement suggests clearly that residents had a positive disposition to partnership. In the domain of Professional Engagement there were a total of 39 comments (see Figure 4.3), with 62% focused on Partnership, 23% on Professional Learning, and 15% on Professional Responsibility in interview 2. By interview 3, Partnership continued to stay overwhelmingly strong accounting for 100% of the responses, when both Professional Learning and Professional Responsibility declined to 0%. This pattern suggests that Partnership was central to residents' focus in the early stages of the TRP. In interview 4 Professional Learning had risen to prominence, which indicates that residents' sense of achievement was more related to their personal growth as a teaching professional.

In interview 2 residents' comments emphasised the importance of the professional relationships between themselves and others in the TRP. For example, Emma commented on her experiences of working with teachers with a professional

manner, *“The most positive learning experience would be the support of the professional teachers I’ve been working with, and their guidance, the site coordinator, my mentor teacher, and the other teachers in the school. Just their experiences of what has worked for them and what hasn’t has been invaluable, because it meant I haven’t had to reinvent the wheel”*.

Grace, commenting on the support from teachers in interview 2, stated, “I find that every teacher has been very supportive, and they’ve all been very forthcoming with their lesson plans, resources, sharing ideas, having a laugh. I haven’t come across a teacher who hasn’t had a really good sense of humour about life and being quite down to earth about things. So that has been a very pleasant part of it for sure”.

At this stage of the interview David talked about the benefit of a healthy relationship with both students and teachers, “...definitely the relationship that you build with the kids and the staff...being in the classroom and actually being able to watch an experienced teacher teach”.

In interview 3 residents’ comments on Partnership emphasised similar points, including the support and feedback from the mentor teacher, modelling by the mentor teacher, opportunity to learn from different teaching techniques through working with other teachers, and the opportunity to be exposed to different school contexts.

By interview 4, which was held during the final block placement for the TRP, the residents’ focus had shifted from Partnership to Professional Learning, with the latter accounting for 79% of responses, and partnership reduced to 21%. At his later stage residents’ comments were focused on mastering their own teaching style and being able to manage the “whole package” of teaching. For example, Emma stated in interview 4, *“The whole block practicum was a positive learning experience because it allowed me to be a reflective practitioner”*. James also commented, *“I guess I feel more confident, more comfortable, and more able to handle the whole package”*. Other residents touched on more specific things, such as seeing how art was integrated into literacy in the school, learning to do explicit teaching through attending workshops, and learning how to engage in collaborative teaching. Whereas comments about Partnership occurred less often at this stage the residents continued

to mention that effective partnerships with teachers in the school had boosted their learning.

4.2.5 Residents' account of their negative learning experiences in the TRP

Comments about residents' sense of negative learning experiences were prompted by derived from the third question in interviews 2 and 3, and the second in interview 4. For interview 2 this was "*What negative learning experiences have you had during this period?*" This was modified in interview 3 to, "*Have you had any further negative learning experiences this time?*" and in interview 4 to, "*What further negative learning experiences have you had since our last interview?*" Thus the residents were encouraged to talk about situations where they were really challenged and had struggled to cope. Responses to these questions identified problems and obstacles with doing course work, lesson planning and classroom teaching.

Sixty-one out of a total of 273 comments were about the negative learning experiences in their professional learning (see Figure 4.1). This is nearly the same number as for positive learning experiences. In terms of distribution, interview 3 had the highest number of negative comments, which suggests that the residents had more difficulties coping with the second placement where they had to adjust to a new school and a new group of students at a different year level. Of the 61 negative learning experience responses, seven concerned Professional Knowledge, 18 Professional Practice, and 36 were related to Professional Engagement (see Figure 4.3). This pattern of distribution suggests that professional learning, responsibilities as a teacher or partnership were the areas where the Residents experienced the most challenges in their learning.

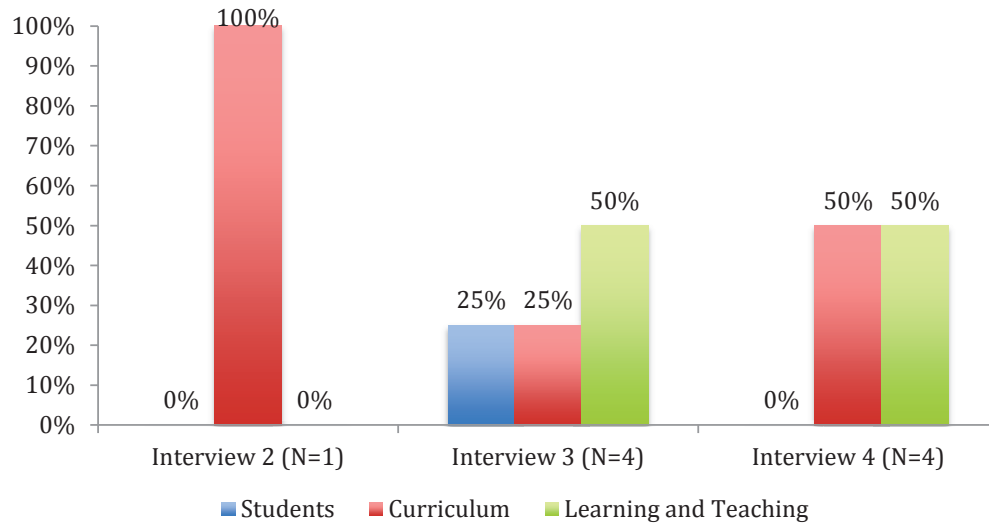


Figure 4.10: Negative learning experiences and Professional Knowledge

When asked what aspects of their learning were negative, the residents identified only a few issues in the Professional Knowledge domain (See Figure 4.10), concerning students, curriculum and how students learn and how to teach them.

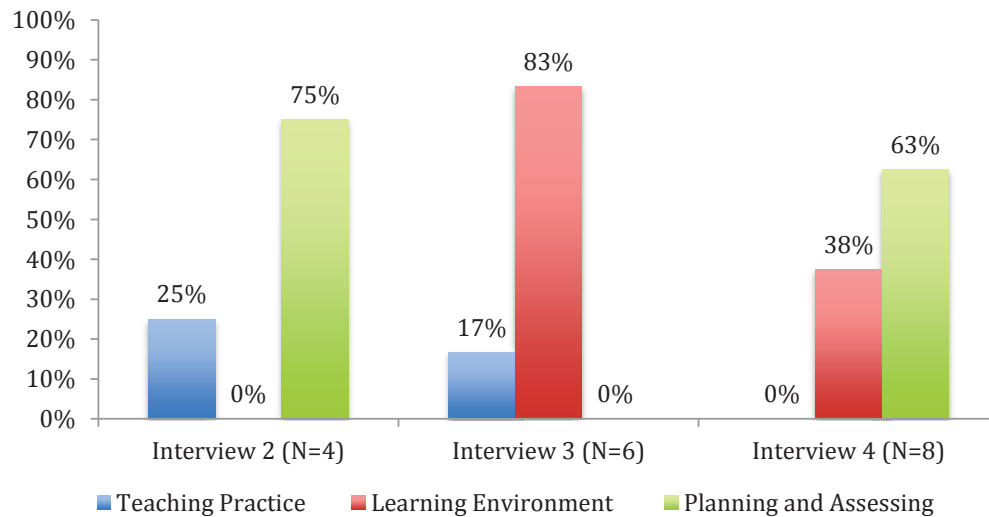


Figure 4.11: Negative learning experiences and Professional Practice

The pattern of responses shown in Figure 4.11 for the domain of Professional Practice shows that the Learning Environment, and Planning and Assessing were the residents' two major concerns. There was a gradual increase of negative learning experiences in this domain as the residents progressed through the program.

In interview 2, the residents' comments were mostly related to Planning and Assessing, (75%). At this stage the residents, were concerned about poor organisation for lesson planning, disjointed knowledge of student's weekly progress, meeting the requirements of forward planning and doing assessment. For example, David commented on the negative impact of only going to school two days week, *"One of the negative experiences is that, two days a week in the school is enough to keep you in the loop of what is happening, but also you miss 3 days, and that is enough to miss a fair portion of things like what is happening in the class and where the kids are progressing in... The other thing I found is being very disjointed in terms of the actual lessons we take...Sometime it is hard to plan a lesson if you haven't seen the first two lessons she [mentor teacher] has done with them on that topic because you don't know how well they grasped it"*.

Yet, by interview 3 the Learning Environment had become a matter of concern, rising from 0% in interview 2 to 83% in interview 3. Areas causing the residents' concern were their struggles with behaviour management, particularly dealing with students who exhibited extreme behaviour. For example, Jack said, *"I was a little bit taken back by these rebellious behaviours that the year six students show, which I didn't get in the year 2 class"*. However, problems of Planning and Assessing receded, declining at this stage to 0%.

In interview 4, Planning and Assessing had reoccurred as obstacles to the residents, with 63% of related responses. Although concerns about Learning Environment persisted, the number of comments dropped to 38%. A particularly challenging issue for residents was changing schools at the commencement of the second semester. They reported feeling inadequately prepared to teach students in a new year level when they started the second placement. And residents indicated they struggled throughout the final part of the TRP (when teaching full time) with the planning and assessment strategies they needed to cater for the range of student abilities in their classes. Similarly in the final block practicum they found the need to do forward planning to be a very difficult task, because they did not have sufficient knowledge of students' academic levels or the learning that had taken place earlier in the year. For example, John said, *"...trying to match up your lesson plan with their intellectual level, that was hard, especially in a group or in a classroom that you have to cater for a very big range, that was [a] definitely a hard thing [that] sort of*

came up”. As for learning environment, comments about behaviour management persisted, and residents were concerned about dealing with interruptions in the class during their final block practicum.

The pattern of negative learning experiences responses about Professional Practice suggests the challenges faced by residents were moderated in part by the demands of the program at particular stages. At the commencement of the program the residents focused on their ability to teach, whereas residents’ responses in interview 2 they expressed finding Planning and assessing most challenging. By interview 3, the residents were in their second school with a new class of students to teach. Their responses indicated that they were struggling to create and maintain a good learning environment, with limited time to get to know the students and to establish rapport. These factors suggested residents’ felt relatively unprepared in terms of effective classroom management. At the end of the program, in the final block practicum, the residents were expected to be able to perform as a full-fledged teacher and to be substantially independent of their mentor teacher. To the residents this was the crescendo of their program. They were expected to use all the knowledge and skills they had learned along the way to demonstrate their independent mastery of teaching. This, of course, was stressful because they were required to integrate all elements of teaching and employ them simultaneously to deal with a broader scale of problems.

In terms of negative learning experiences, the actual practice of teaching did not appear to cause the residents much problem. For instance, teaching practice was less prominent overall, with only 25% of responses in interview 2, and 17% in interview 3, and 0% in interview 4. This suggests that the residents had no major problems during practice teaching except for the sequencing of lessons as noted by William in interview 3. As indicated in the previous paragraph, the majority of the residents’ negative learning experiences were linked to their capacity to integrate their knowledge supporting learning environments, and planning and assessing for learning.

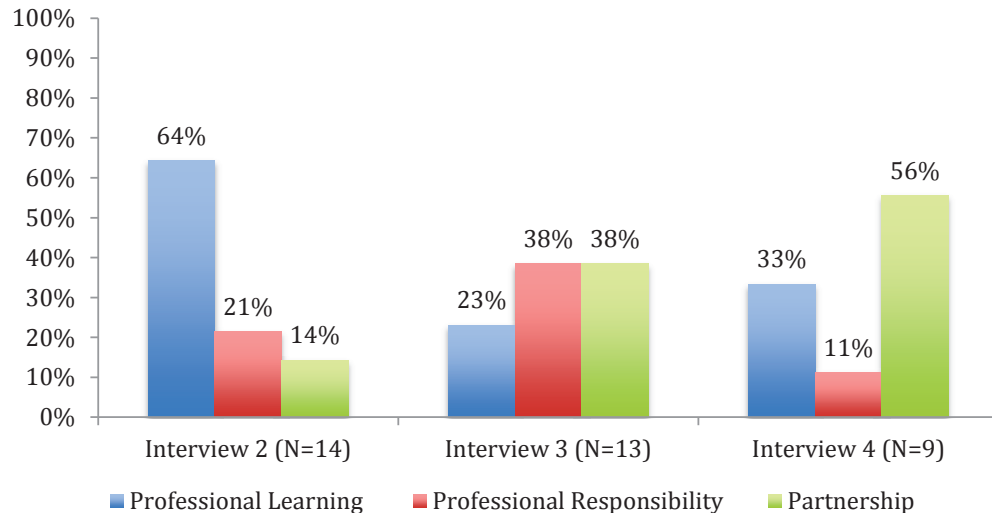


Figure 4.12: Negative learning experiences and Professional Engagement

The pattern of responses for negative learning experiences in the Professional Engagement domain suggests the residents had encountered problems across all three areas, with 14 comments focused on Professional Learning, 13 on Partnership and nine on Professional Responsibility.

In interview 2 residents' sense of negative learning experiences were concentrated on professional learning, with 64% of the responses, compared to only 21% and 14% respectively for Professional Responsibility and Partnership. Residents reported that in terms of their professional learning they encountered many problems, such as lack of time to prepare for the first block practicum, a clash between their personal beliefs about teaching and the evidence-based practices espoused during the TRP, falling behind in university and school work, implementing unsuccessful lessons, conflicting information from their university course work and mentor teacher, and being expected to prepare and submit relevant work for assessment. For example, William's comment targeted the dilemma of the mis-match between what he learned about literacy teaching at university and the practice in his placement school. He said, *"The other thing I found a little challenging was that we've learnt a fair bit of theory in the lectures, and some of the teachers that we are working with have different methods of teaching. We just have to learn these methods first, and [then] understand their way of thinking"*. Sarah's comments also reflected on this struggle and the fact that she was dealing with other responsibilities, including work, on top of her studies during the TRP. She said,

“There was not really anything negative I would say. It was just mainly I think at the beginning when we are doing uni and teaching. The fact that it was just so much work, and that it was just so full on and time-consuming, like doing all the lesson plans for school and getting organised for school, and then coming to do all the uni work, and theories as well, and then the exams. I struggled trying to organise everything, and because I worked as well”.

By interview 3 residents’ concerns about Professional Responsibility and Partnership rose to 38% each, whereas concerns about Professional Learning declined to 23%. At this stage residents were discouraged about their capacity to assume full professional responsibilities and felt limited by their student teacher identity, while continuing to feel overwhelmed with the workload in the course. The latter was deemed particularly demanding because residents were focused on being prepared for their final block practicum. When asked about further Negative Experiences, other than what she had told the researcher previously, Stella looked quite tense, and said *“just the workload, unbelievable”*. She stressed the word *“unbelievable”* in a prolonged and exaggerated way. To support her statement, Stella then listed all the things she had to do: readings, assignments, daily lesson plans, and final practicum preparation and paper work in preparation for the final practicum. She added, *“It seems everything is expanded and the time shorter that is the biggest challenge”*. Her stress was palpable in her voice and in her body language.

Professional partnerships were a problem for several residents in interview 3, especially with mentor teachers. They reported unsatisfactory modelling from mentor teachers, particularly in the areas of: creating a teaching program or lesson plans, and insufficient time with mentor teachers to discuss aspects of their development and performance. There were also occasional doubts about the way some mentor teachers handled their own teaching, issues concerning their struggle with the expectations of mentor teachers, and communication barriers.

By interview 4, Negative feelings still lingered with regard to Partnership and Professional Learning at 56% and 33% respectively, whereas negative feelings of professional responsibility were low, at 11%. Residents’ concerns about mentor teachers continued. For example, Ben commenting on his communication with his mentor teacher said, *“One of the major barriers for me in my class this term was that my mentor was always busy and stressed with her work, ...time-wise I always felt*

like I was impinging on her because she was always doing something else. So it wasn't like there was an opening for me for us to go, 'Ok, let's discuss things' I found our communication difficult. She was very intense, and if I asked her about a certain point, she would stay with the point for ages... I found that communication really exhausting ...".

4.2.6 Impact of learning experiences on the residents' views of teaching

Residents' comments about the impact of their Positive and Negative experiences on their views of teaching were derived from the fourth question in interviews 2 and 3, and the third question in interview 4. For interview 2 this was *"Thinking about these past experiences, how have they impacted on your views of teaching"*. The question was modified in interview 3 and 4 to, *"How have these recent experiences changed your views of teaching?"* Thus the residents were encouraged to think deeply about how any of those positive or negative learning experiences impacted on their beliefs or views about teaching and about the residents' change of mindset regarding aspects of their teaching.

Referring back to Figures 4.2 and 4.3, there were only 53 comments out of the total 273 related to the sense of impact. Interview 2 had the biggest number of comments at 23, followed by 16 in interview 3 and 14 in interview 4. Out of the 53 impact-related responses, five concerned professional knowledge, six professional practice and 42 were related to professional engagement. This suggests the major focus of 'impact' was being a teaching professional.

In the domain of Professional Knowledge, impact was focused wholly on Learning and Teaching in interview 2 (N=1), and on students in interview 3 (N=1) and interview 4 (N=3), indicating resident's perceptions of students and how to teach the students were only slightly impacted. While these responses were low, they increased from interview 2 to interview 4.

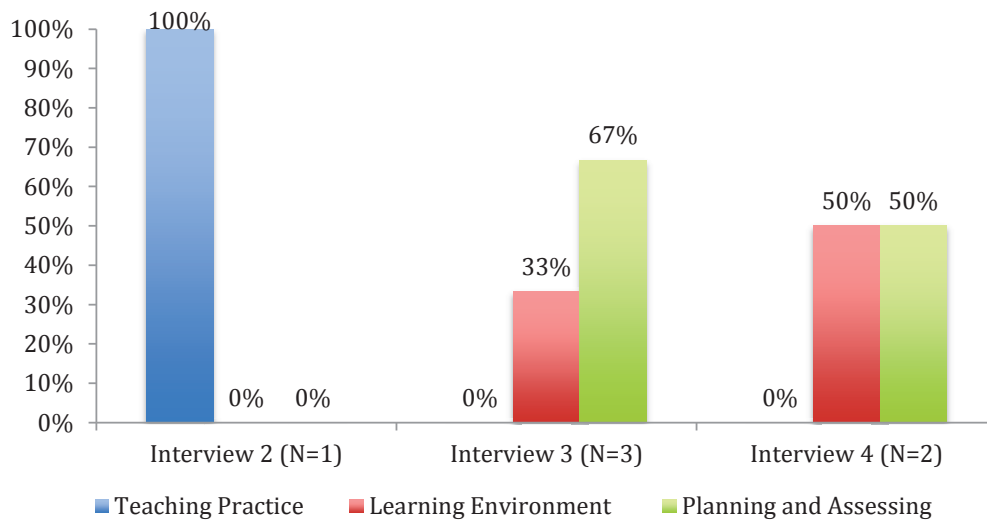


Figure 4.13: Impact and Professional Practice

As shown in Figure 4.13, a total of six comments indicated that the impact on Professional Practice had been low. In interview 2, impact was only related to the practice of teaching; by interview 3, planning and assessing and the learning environment increased and were 67% and 33% respectively, whereas teaching practice had declined to 0%. By interview 4 Learning Environment and Planning and Assessing became even.

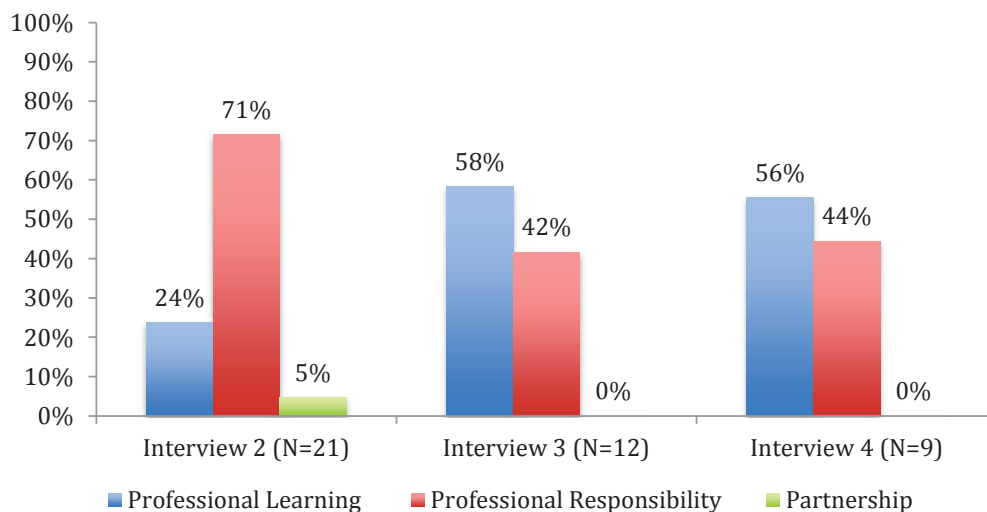


Figure 4.14: Impact and Professional Engagement

As shown in Figure 4.14, impact on professional responsibility was the strongest in interview 2, accounting for 71% of the responses. The impact on professional responsibility fell in interviews 3 and 4, with 42% and 44% responses respectively. Professional learning was also impacted strongly and consistently

throughout the three interviews. However, residents rarely commented on impact concerning Partnership, with only 5% of responses in interview 2.

In interview 2, residents' comments about their understanding of responsibilities as a teaching professional had been significantly impacted. Their comments were focused on what teachers are required to do and the complexity of teaching. For example, John, who was coming from a physical education teacher background, commented, "*It is completely different from what I expected*". At the stage of completing his first practicum, John said, "*It gives me the strong belief that you need to be on top of absolutely everything from the start...organisation strategies, teaching methods, rapport with the kids... I knew all those are important in school, but actually putting them in practice, it was all big words until I had to do it*". Jack, a recent graduate from university, said, "*Teachers are one hundred per cent super heroes*" and he admitted he was "*fairly naïve*", concluding that, "*The level of commitment you have to put into teaching far exceeded what I believed when I started the course*". Stella, with some previous experience as a dancing teacher made similar statements, indicating that she knew "*what was entailed in teaching*", but she didn't know "*the depth of it*".

At this stage, residents' perceptions of their own Professional Learning appeared to be impacted on as well because they commented on aspects such as: being in the classroom, which helped them find their own stance of teaching, understanding more of school events, becoming more comfortable teaching lower primary or upper primary, and lessening of their initial fears, as a result of the school immersion.

In interview 3, as the residents progressed into their second placement, their views of Professional Learning were strongly influenced by what they had experienced in the first school. Grace and Ben indicated they now had some new understandings about Catholic schools. Yet, other residents were less enthusiastic about the change of placement school in the second school. For example, Sophia, who was having problems adjusting and bonding with the students from a new year-group, attributed this to the lack of time, commenting that the change of schools had impacted on her "*in a negative way*".

However, in interview 4, Emma and James acknowledged the benefits of having two placements in their professional learning. Emma “...*realised the importance of cohesive staff and having a strong leader*” after she had moved from a Catholic school, where students were fairly well-behaved to a new school in a low socioeconomic area, where lots of students demonstrated behaviour issues. James experienced quite the opposite to Emma, because in moving to the second placement school he had very few classroom management issues, saying “*the change of context makes it possible for me to understand where the focus should be and how you can do it*”. Being in a second placement, also affected how residents felt about themselves. Jack said his experiences had made him realise “*how unprepared I would be taking a class*”. He believed his youth and limited life experiences made him less resilient, and less able to “*establish authority*” among the students.

4.2.7 Summary of professional learning

In this section the researcher has described in length residents’ professional learning in four themes: Achievement, LE Exp+, LE Exp- and Impact on their views of teaching. Directed by the questions, residents identified achievements in each of the professional domains of knowledge, practice and engagement. In terms of Professional Knowledge, the residents’ initial achievements were related to their understandings of school students, and as they progressed through the year, residents became more concerned about issues of curriculum. In the first semester, residents focused on getting to know students and maintaining healthy relationships with them. In the second semester, residents’ achievements were centred on building skills in the Professional Knowledge domain and this appeared to enable them to link curriculum design and implementation to the needs of students. Toward the end of the program, the residents’ sense of achievement about students and curriculum seemed to become more evenly balanced, suggesting they had accomplished an integration of these two sets of knowledge.

As for Professional Practice, over the course of the year residents focused on gaining control over the learning environment and building skills in planning lessons and assessing student learning. In addition, the residents achieved growth in learning and teaching through advancing their knowledge about how students learned and how, as teachers, they could meet student’ needs. Achievement in teaching practice, as a performative task appeared to be of secondary importance to knowledge about

the practice of teaching. Residents paid more attention in discussions about knowledge related to practice than the task itself. Understandably, residents were more concerned about the skills and processes they needed to master to support effective teaching than the performance of teaching.

In the Professional Engagement domain, residents initially focused on developing a sense of being a professional teacher through all the areas encompassed by this domain (i.e. learning, responsibility, and partnership). Of these, Professional learning continued to grow throughout the second semester and remained stronger than both Professional responsibility and Partnership at the completion of the TRP.

Residents felt they had positive learning experiences in each of the professional domains at all stages of their program; however, an overwhelming proportion of the Positive learning experiences occurred in the domain of Professional Engagement. This suggested the major focus of residents' learning was about being engaged in the profession of teaching.

Positive experience in the Professional Knowledge domain was limited initially to students and the curriculum. However, there was no positive learning experience reported for these areas in the later stage of the program. In terms of Professional Practice in the early stage of the TRP, residents felt positive about their teaching practice and their capacity for planning and assessing. As they proceeded to the second placement, positive learning experiences in planning and assessing were not reported, whereas positive feelings about learning and teaching and managing the learning environment were noted. By the end of the second placement, residents' positive experiences related to learning and teaching and teaching practice diminished, while comments about the learning environment remained, and planning and assessing re-emerged. These data suggest a complex interplay between elements related to students, classroom environments and professional skill development, with a progression from preoccupations with students through to curriculum, to broader areas of planning and management of learning.

Positive experiences in the domain of Professional Engagement commenced with partnership being prominent, with residents reporting that they found it beneficial to be professionally engaged with their mentor teachers, students, and other colleagues in the placement school, parents/carers and the wider community.

Towards the second placement, Partnership continued to dominate over Professional Learning and Professional Responsibility. As residents approached the end of the second placement their sense of Positive experiences in professional learning was at its strongest level. At this stage their positive feelings about Partnership had dropped considerably. This pattern of responses suggests residents' focus was initially on their engagement with the professional community, and in the latter part of the TRP this shifted to their personal professional growth.

With regard to negative learning experiences, the data showed that residents were challenged in learning across all three professional domains. Professional Practice and Professional Engagement were associated with high levels of negative experiences, Whereas Professional Knowledge was associated with some negative experiences, it was the area least mentioned.

Negative experiences related to Professional Practice suggest residents were challenged in the areas of lesson planning and assessing students, particularly at the beginning of the course. As residents progressed through the year, they made negative comments about issues related to the Learning Environment occurred more often than for Planning and Assessing, Learning and Teaching, and Teaching Practice. Towards the end of the program, residents were challenged the most by planning and assessing, and negative experiences continued to persist for the learning environment, and learning and teaching.

In the domain of Professional Engagement the residents' negative feelings in the early part of the program were about improving their own professionalism, through fulfilling professional responsibilities as a teacher, and maintaining effective partnerships. During their second placement, Professional Responsibility and Partnership were more strongly associated with negative experiences, whereas negative associations with professional learning appeared to be declining. Toward the end the second placement, residents' negative associations with partnership remained stronger than professional learning and professional responsibility.

To sum up: the results from the Positive and Negative impacts on learning suggest that although the residents had a feeling of accomplishment across all domains during the TRP, these areas also contained challenges for their learning. These issues are discussed further in Chapter six.

From the positive or negative learning experiences reported, it can be seen there was minor impact on residents' views in the domains of Professional Knowledge and Professional Practice; however there were significant influences in the domain of Professional Engagement. In the domain of Professional Knowledge, residents reported no impact was on the curriculum throughout the course, but views about students showed a slight change. In terms of Professional Practice, though the extent of impact was still fairly small, it was evident residents' views on Learning and Teaching, and Teaching Practice were influenced by their learning experiences in the early stage, whereas in the latter stage the influence shifted to their views on Learning Environment and Planning and Assessing. The major impact on residents' views emanated from the domain of Professional Engagement. In the early stage, residents' thinking about their responsibility as a teacher was most heavily impacted. Alongside Professional Responsibility, there was also significant influence on residents' views of their own professional learning as a student teacher. Impacts on both Professional Learning and Professional Responsibility persisted until the end of the program.

4.3 Residents' Professional Identity

In this section the researcher focuses on an analysis of how the residents perceived their professional identity as a result of their learning experience during the TRP. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the researcher, due to the scope of this study, adopted a much narrower definition of professional identity than what is used in most of the existing literature. Therefore, the researcher's analysis of residents' professional identity focused on three themes: 1) how they saw themselves as teachers, 2) whether they had a sense of belonging to the school community and to the teaching profession, and 3) how well they saw themselves applying the knowledge of learning, teaching, and context to their work in the classroom. For the third aspect, residents' views about their capacity to plan, provide instruction, diagnose students' learning needs, assess learning outcomes, and classroom management were assessed. To examine residents' perceptions about their professional identity, responses to relevant questions from interview 1 to interview 4 were collocated and analysed.

4.3.1 Residents' concepts and views of being a teacher

Teaching identity is commonly recognised as a personal concept that is a reflection of “how one identifies with being a teacher and how one feels as a teacher” (Mayer, 1999, p. 8). Many pre-service teachers enter their education courses with a preconceived set of ideas and beliefs about what teaching is like and what teachers should be able to do, based in part from their early education experiences as pupils in the classroom, and from the societal and cultural images of teachers. These early ideas and beliefs form the basis of pre-service teachers' self-identity as they commence their teacher education program. Because pre-service teachers' sense of identity is continually challenged during the course of teaching preparation programs (Danielewicz, 2001), the researcher seeks to explore the nature and extent of impact of their personal attributes and the TRP on residents' further development of their self-identity as a teacher. Data for analysis were derived from Question 4 in interview 1 and Question 5 in interviews 2, 3 and 4. For interview 1 the questions was “*How do you describe yourself as a prospective teacher?*” This was modified in interviews 2, 3 and 4 to, “*How do you think about yourself as a teacher now?*”

4.3.1.1 Residents' initial views

In interview 1, residents were encouraged to describe themselves as a prospective teacher. Residents' initial statements made upon entry to the TRP revealed what kind of teacher the residents' aspired to be, and reflected the attributes they had associated with their concepts of “*a good teacher*”. At this stage of the TRP, most residents associated teaching with their capacities to work with students. For example, some saw themselves as being able “*to relate to students*”, “*be a role-model for children*”, “*be approachable and fair*”, or “*be easy-going, but be able to instil discipline when necessary*”. They also used words such as “*caring*”, “*nursing*”, “*encouraging*”, “*well-liked*”, “*friendly*”, a “*good listener*”, and, “*kind and understanding*”. They viewed themselves as being a hard-working teacher and they recognised that teaching was going to be a demanding job. Residents further identified the need to be a positive force in the classroom, a person who “*knowledgeable*”, “*enthusiastic*”, “*organised*”, “*flexible*”, “*hands on being able to get kids to do things practically*”, “*able to conduct interesting and engaging classes*”, and “*able to teach in an effective way*”. Overall, at the commencement of the TRP, the residents' views of being a teacher revolved around relationships with

students and the level of energy, spirit and skill they would need to be able to engage them in learning.

4.3.1.2 Residents' emergent views

In interview 2, held at the end of school placement 1, a lot of the residents' responses were focused on changes in their understanding of some of the subtleties of the teacher-student relationship. Whereas residents were initially prone to envisage a "kind and easy-going" teacher, more than half of the 12 residents had begun to establish a firmer stance on their relationship with students. For example, William said *"I am more aware of the need to set boundaries and rules with students, and making sure the rules are explicit"*. Other comments had shown that residents' experiences of dealing with students "day in and day out" were strong catalysts for this change. At this stage they were challenged to find a balance between "being cool and laid back" and "being strict and firm".

Along with these considerations, the residents believed they needed to become more efficient in lesson planning, to be more organised, and to get on top of managing student behaviours. For example, James explained why he thought he was a better teacher *"I am a lot better now than I was at the beginning... I didn't have a lot of ideas about how, more from the point of view of the classroom management, to organise the class and get the children to do stuff. My expectations were completely incorrect about how it worked... Now I have different expectations and a different understanding of how to get things to happen"*. Residents' responses suggested that their perceptions or self-image of a teacher had moved from being a "well-liked" teacher to a higher level of contemplation about how to expand knowledge and enhance students' performance. In this sense the residents were concerned with what attributes would make them more effective teachers.

On the other hand, Stella reported she was struggling with putting herself in the teacher image, she said "I feel I haven't learnt anything, my biggest problem is I don't know how to do an overall plan and put each lesson in place for a purpose... because of that I struggled... how am I going to run a classroom next year when I have no idea of how they are setting everything up?...at the moment I don't think I can make a good teacher". She explained the problem was partly her personal struggle with self-doubt about being a teacher. She also pointed out that her mentor teacher did not provide her with effective modelling. Though this was an

individualised case, it illustrates the emotional investment in the development of teacher-identity.

However, by interview 3, conducted halfway through the second school placement, residents' comments about their perceptions of being a teacher fell into two categories: confidence and uncertainty. Affirmative and confident comments on being a teacher signified feelings of advancement in the residents' sense of professional identity as a teacher. For example, James stated: *"I guess when you are not being put under pressure all the time by the children's misbehaviour, you are able to develop more confidence in your own abilities"*. Contrasting comments featured residents' lack of conviction in themselves as teachers. For example, Emma said: *"growing is constantly happening, but in some ways I feel like [I am] going backwards"*. For another example, Stella said: *"I am still trying to not think too far in the future that I can actually do it, but I am getting more comfortable in the classroom. Whether or not I can carry that out in full-time teaching in a class on my own, I am not sure how that will go, but I try not to think about it. It will freak me out"*. Overall, at this stage of the TRP, some of the residents seemed to be undergoing a turbulent period. They were attempting to reinforce a positive teacher identity for themselves but some were facing self-doubt about their capacity to feel effective or to feel confident they could develop further.

In interview 4, conducted at the end of the TRP, and at the end of their final 5-week placement, residents' perceptions of being a teacher seemed to be overwhelmingly more affirmative than at earlier stages. The majority of their responses demonstrated confidence and a sense of conviction of their self-image as a teacher. For example, Stella stated: *"I think I can do it now...I feel like I've got a good base to go out now"*. David illustrated another positive response, as he said: *"I am pretty confident having that five weeks' experiences and coming through that. I am happy with the feedback I've got and looking forward to going out there and doing it for myself next year"*. In addition to being more confident, residents were more open about the challenges that were ahead of them. Several commented that they would need to continue to grow once they formally entered the profession. One illuminating comment from James was that: *"Although I know I can do it, [but] I won't go in there thinking this is easy"*. These comments suggest that, at the end of the TRP the residents had acquired more mature perceptions of their self-image as a

teacher and more sophisticated understandings about what it is like to be a teacher. However, it should be noted that this was not universal. A small number of residents who indicated they lacked confidence in their ability to teach, and expressed a desire to have more pre-service experiences.

4.3.2 Residents' experience of belonging to the school community and the teaching profession

As described above, residents' perceptions of their sense of belonging to the school community and teaching have been explored to assess the impact of their learning experiences on the development of their professional identity. Data for analysis were derived from questions 9 and 10 in interview 2 and question 9 in interview 3. For interview 2 the questions were “*Do you have a sense of belonging to the school community now?*” and “*Do you have a sense of belonging to the teaching profession now?*” For interview 3 the questions were combined as “*Even though this is a new school for you, how do you think of your sense of belonging to the school and to the teaching profession?*” The results of analysis are presented in Figure 4.15, which demonstrates for each of the two placement schools how residents felt about being part of the school community and the teaching profession.

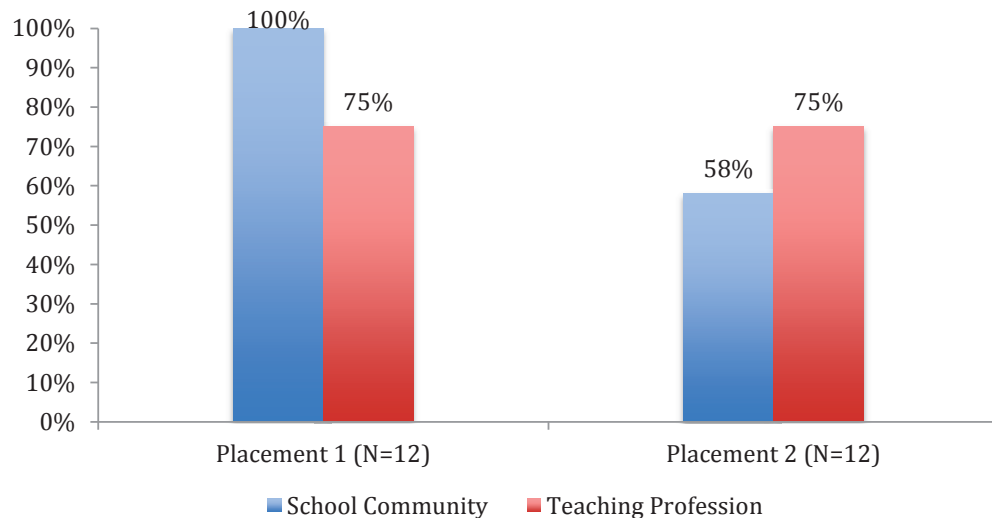


Figure 4.15: Residents' sense of belonging to school community and the teaching profession

In interview 2, conducted at the end of the first placement, all 12 residents reported they felt part of the placement school community and that they felt “settled and comfortable”. They attributed this to the inclusive approach by people in their placement schools and the support they had from the school staff. Residents reported

their inclusion in activities such as staff functions at school and social activities outside of school, as well as student sports events. This made them feel like they were a legitimate part of the school. For example, in describing her attachment to the school at the end of placement 1, Sarah said: *“I am really going to miss coming here every day, and miss the kids. It’s going to be odd not coming here, like knowing everyone, and kind of starting fresh in another school is going to be different”*.

A number of residents reported that the amount of time they were having in the schools permitted them to get to know teachers and engage in regular and relaxed conversations, enabling them to feel more *“at home”* in the school. Their conversations with mentor teachers helped them cope with the day-to-day issues they were facing. For example, Sarah said in interview 2, *“The staff are very supportive and friendly. If I feel I have a problem, I have a lot of people that I can go to for help. That kind of helps a lot as well. It makes you feel like you are actually part of it all”*. Some other respondents indicated that Resident’s feelings evidenced a deeper level of attachment to the school. For example, Stella said in interview 2, *“I love this school, I would actually love to work here. Teachers are great. ...[my] good mentor teacher, and the mentor teacher next door, just include you in anything...I love [how] other mentor teachers just come up and ask how you are going, by that you sort of feel like at home, and other people in the staff room as well, if you talk to them and they will talk back to you. It is not isolated at all and it is very welcoming. I have a very relaxed feel here, so that helps as well”*. In this case the resident’s liking for the school reflected the support of her mentor teachers and the congenial attitude of other staff. Apparently, the length of time in the school and the relaxing collegial support created an encouraging and welcoming environment for residents at a time when they were developing their sense of professional teacher identity and exploring their role as a member of a real school community.

By interview 3, however, the sense of belonging had dropped, with only 58% of residents reporting they felt part of the school community. Comments from the residents suggested that the schools continued to embrace a supportive approach, with the decline in positive feelings linked to the new challenges experienced by the residents in the second half of the TRP. Residents’ comments in interview 3 indicated that they had much less time to adapt to their second school, and the expectations for their teaching were much higher. The second placement was their

final placement and was critical for the final assessment of their teaching and readiness for graduation and employment. Consequently, the residents felt they were under extra pressure to perform for the second school and mentor teacher. Some of the residents reported that the second placement was a constant struggle for them, which of course affected how they felt about themselves and the school.

In contrast with diminished sense of belonging to the school community, the residents' sense of belonging to the teaching profession stayed consistently strong, with 75% of residents' reporting a positive response in interviews 2 and 3. In the initial phase of the program the residents' view of themselves as a teacher was vague and unsure. By the middle of the program it appeared to be quite firm and strong. Typical initial comments at interview 2, conducted at the end of the first placement, included: *"I do think of myself as a teacher now"*. Residents attributed this to the continued exposure to teaching through the combined regular weekly placement and long block placement in the first semester. This placement model provided them with a personal and lived experience of being a student teacher, and this helped to gradually instill a sense of belonging to the profession. Ben stated: *"As I start running lessons, being practical, and getting some on-the-ground experience I am starting to get that sense of 'oh, I am a teacher' from the outset finding what teachers do and to now coming into the circle going 'yeah, I am a teacher, I am part of that'"*. In interview 3, the residents felt they continued to develop their sense of belonging to the teaching profession. For example, Stella in interview 3 said, *"It's been growing. I really want to get in there and start teaching"*.

However, some residents seemed to struggle with their sense of belonging to the teaching profession. The absence of autonomy as a student teacher appeared to be of concern for some of them. David commenting on this in interview 2 said: *"I guess so far everything we do is what we are told to do by university or school... I think it will probably come after graduation once I go out and start teaching on my own...still finding out ways of how to do things but having a mentor teacher is a safety net...."*. Others, who were not confident in themselves, tended to distance themselves from the teaching profession. One Resident, Stella, who had doubts about herself from the beginning of the course, commented: *"Not yet, I am more of an outsider just looking in, but I think a lot of that just comes from my insecurities of actually thinking whether or not I can actually make it as a teacher, so if I don't*

think I can make it as teacher well then I am not going to pass myself in their league ...I have great admiration for teachers, so not yet". Other comments about seeing teaching as just a job and feeling still very inexperienced appeared to contribute to a lack of a sense of belonging in some residents.

4.3.3 Residents' confidence as a teacher

Residents' confidence in teaching is the third aspect that this study examined with regard to the influence of residents' learning experiences on the development of their professional identity as a teacher. In each of the four interviews, residents were invited to comment on how confident they felt about their ability to teach and help students learn. In interview 1, they were asked "*How well do you think you will be able to teach and help students learn?*" For interviews 2 and 3, the question was slightly modified as "*How confident do you feel in your teaching now?*" For interview 4 this was modified to "*Do you feel ready to take responsibility for your own class as a regular teacher? Why/ Why not?*".

Other than their overall confidence, the residents were also asked to describe their confidence in planning for teaching, creating learning environments in the classroom, assessing student achievement, and giving feedback. When answering these questions, residents' were encouraged to talk about any fears, uncertainties or discomfort they felt when, and if, they experienced a lack of confidence. In interview 1 they were asked, "*How ready do you feel now to plan for teaching and to create a learning environment in classrooms, to assess student achievement, and to give feedback?*". In interviews 2, and 3 the residents were asked 8 "*How confident do you feel in following guidelines of the curriculum to plan for teaching, handling whole class teaching, and using assessment to assist your teaching?*" And for interview 4, the question was "*How confident do you feel in following the guidelines of the curriculum to plan for teaching, handling whole class teaching, and using assessment to assist your teaching?*"

The analysis of data about residents' perceptions of their ability to teach was assessed using a 4-point ordinal confidence rating scale. The scale, shown in Table 4.2, was developed to indicate a point score of 1-10 for the categories of confidence that were judged to be in the range of none (to virtually none), low, moderate and high. The researcher calculated a confidence score for each resident ascribing a score to represent these four indicators and for other information collated at the interviews.

The words used by the residents to describe their confidence were categorised to provide the score. For example, when asked about her confidence in interview 1, Stella said, *“It is probably lacking”*. She further explained: *“Whenever I start anything new, I always doubt myself, and think I can’t do it”*. A score of 2 was given to Stella at the entry of the program for this response because ‘confidence was lacking’. In this case Stella’s confidence was rated as “None”.

Table 4.2: Ordinal Scale of Confidence Rating

Rating	Score	Indicator
None	1,2	very nervous and anxious, lacking, not at all, overwhelmed;
Low	3,4,5	low, confidence shaken, confidence dropped a lot;
Moderate	6,7,8	reasonably confident, fairly confident, pretty confident;
High	9,10	very confident, feeling ready to teach;

4.3.3.1 Residents’ confidence levels throughout the TRP

The accumulative percentage of residents’ confidence levels from interview 1 to interview 4 is presented in Figure 4.17.

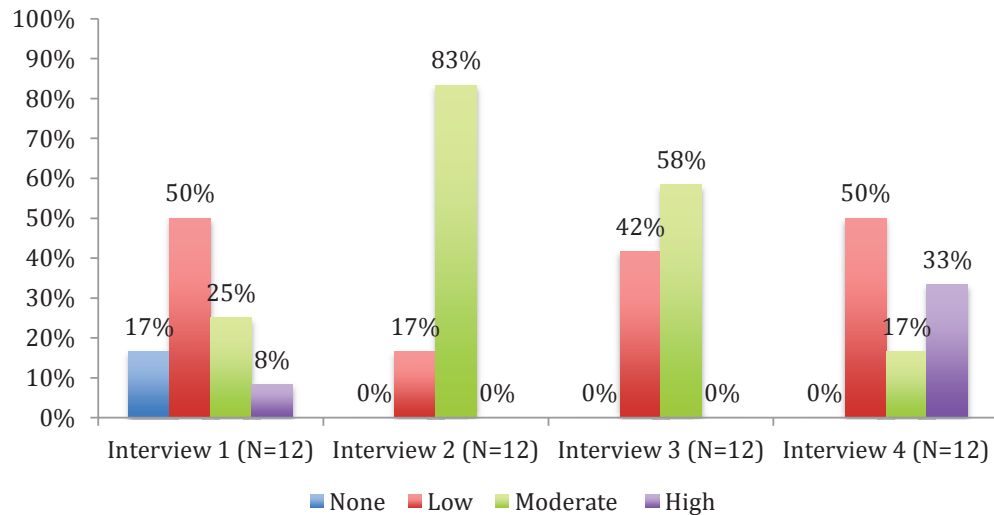


Figure 4.16: Residents’ confidence level throughout the TRP

It can be seen from Figure 4.16 that residents’ confidence in their ability to teach grew between interviews 1 and 2, with 83% reporting they were moderately confident in interview 2. However, confidence fell by interview 3, and 42% of the residents reported low confidence. Residents’ confidence decreased again by interview 4, when low confidence increased to 50%. This pattern suggests that

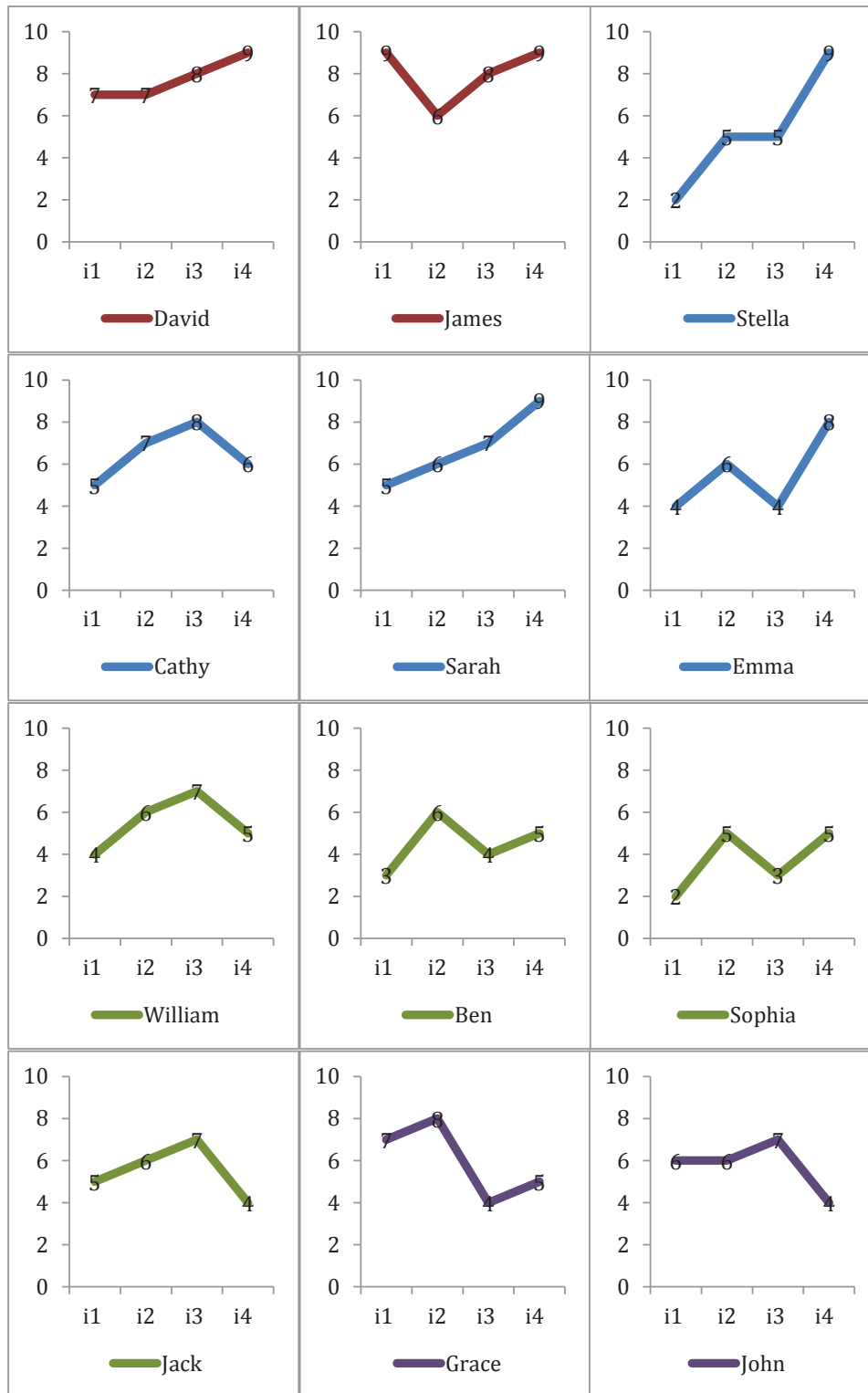
residents' perceptions of confidence in their ability to teach were low on commencement of the TRP, and it peaked at the end of school placement 1. The drop of moderate confidence to 58% during the middle of the second placement indicates that the residents' confidence was shaken as they changed to a new placement school and faced heavier demands.

On entering into the TRP, the majority of the residents (67%) were not confident. At this stage they were particularly concerned about their capacity to manage a classroom. Other issues of concern related to teaching subject matter like, English and maths, lesson planning, and integrating ICT into their teaching. Anxieties about personal weakness or personality flaws concerned some residents. Cathy for example, had a low confidence level despite her prior experiences working as an Education Support officer for students with special needs and as an art teacher for over 5 years. She was concerned about classroom management and her change of role in the classroom. In the interview she commented, "*...classroom frightens me...handling a whole class and its responsibility is daunting...my main concern is changing from education support to mainstream...*" However, 27% of residents who were judged to have a moderate to high level of confidence upon entry to the program; most of these reported some prior work experience in teaching.

The results for the second semester of the TRP demonstrate that residents' confidence fell following the change of school. As indicated in the previous discussion on sense of belonging to the school community, the combined effects of changing school and preparation for their final assessment created a stressful period for residents in the second semester of the TRP. The most confident residents were able to adjust to these demands; for example, James expressed his confidence in his readiness to teach. He was aware of the challenges ahead, but believed he had the ability to be an adaptive practitioner: "*I have got a pretty good idea about what I need to do in there to make it happen. I don't know everything, but I know enough to...make it better as time goes by*".

These data demonstrate the marked differences in the feelings of confidence in the residents at the end of the TRP. Half (50%) completed the program with confidence in their future teaching. The other 50% finished the program with a sense of inadequacy, suggesting that they would need additional support as they entered employment as a teacher.

Individual confidence scores were found to change considerably during the course of the TRP. Figure 4.18 on the following page indicates that the residents entered the TRP with varying levels of confidence. Information from the interviews suggests that these differences reflect personal traits, prior knowledge and experiences, and beliefs about teaching and learning on entry to the program. The variability in confidence levels, and the pattern of change for individual residents throughout the TRP, probably reflects a combination of their personal characteristics, and their learning experiences and support during the program. It appears that each resident reacted to the program in different ways. Contextual factors such as placement school, mentor teacher, students and other personal circumstances may also have also influenced residents' confidence at different times in the program.



1-2= None, 3-5=Low, 6-8=Moderate, 9-10=High

Figure 4.17: Graphical representation of resident's overall confidence

Although Figure 4.17 shows that each resident had a unique confidence journey during the TRP, and there were some discernible trends among them. Figure 4.19 illustrates four different patterns of change of confidence at various stages of the program.

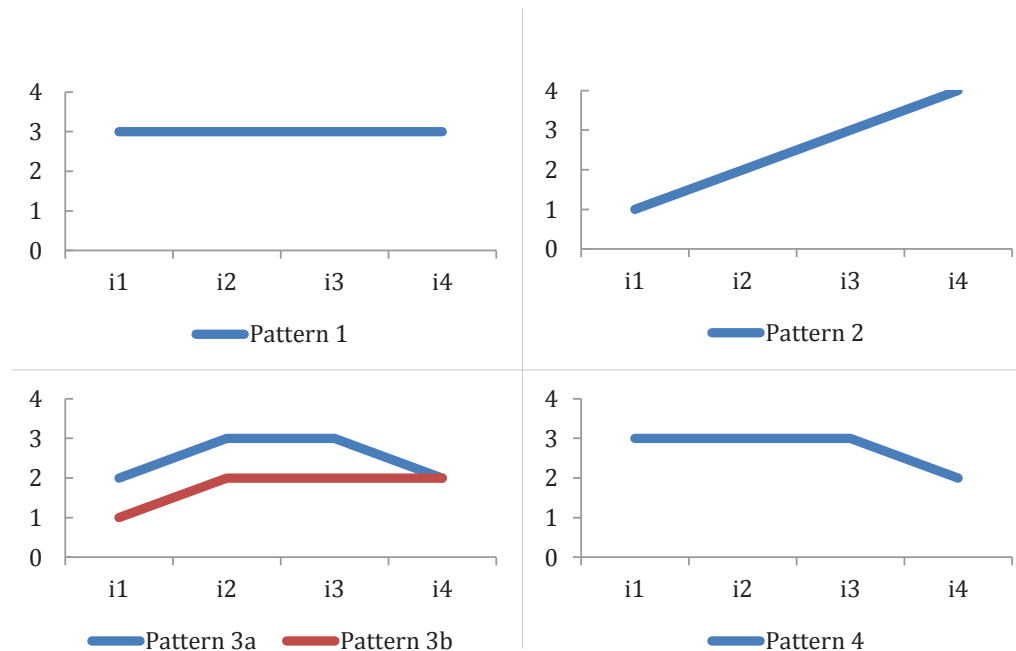


Figure 4.18: Patterns of residents' confidence level

Pattern 1 represents trajectories for two residents, James and David, who started the TRP with a moderate to high level of confidence and remained the same level at the completion of the program. James was a mature-age resident with 12 years of work experience teaching English as a foreign language and many years of experience as a director of studies of language colleges and training teachers to teaching English as a foreign language. He was very confident and believed that he would be able to handle the demands of learning to teach. As indicated, he showed high confidence at the beginning of the TRP and concluded with a high confidence level. However, his confidence fell to moderate level in the middle of the program when the demands of the course intensified; but he regained his high confidence level at the end of the program. Similarly, David was moderately confident at the beginning because he felt he had a fairly thorough understanding of teaching as a result of his previous work experience relating to teaching. Prior to the course he had worked in a sporting organisation for seven years whose role was to go to local schools to deliver sports lessons of 40 minutes per class, together with the physical

education teachers. He was also involved in a 6-week physical education program at a local university, in which he trained student teachers to teach cricket within school environments. As David progressed in the TRP, his confidence level remained strong and he completed the course with a higher confidence level.

Pattern 2 shows a pattern of steady growth of confidence for Stella, Sarah, Cathy and Emma (N=4). Stella represents an example of this pattern, showing marked changes from none to high. On entry to the program she was not confident at all and full of self-doubt and fears, she said, *“Whenever I start anything new, I always doubt myself, and think I can’t do it...fears of spelling and grammar overshadow everything else”*. However at the end of the program she felt very ready to teach. She said: *“Very surprisingly, I think I do”*. Stella had a sharp learning curve in her professional development growing from a very diffident and self-doubting novice who was terrified with her capacity to produce English spelling and grammar in the front of the classroom, to a confident, assured and potentially job-ready beginning teacher.

Pattern 3 represents the trajectory for Jack, William, Ben and Sophia (N=4) who started the TRP with a low to moderate level of confidence and concluded with a low confidence level. The pattern in this case is not simple or consistent. As illustrated in Figure 4.19 the pattern for this group of residents demonstrated two variants. Pattern 3a represents William, Ben and Jack. They started with a low level of confidence and experienced a period of increased confidence during the two placement periods, but fell back to a low level confidence at the end of the program. Pattern 3b, represents a single case, Sophia, who was a fresh graduate with some work experience as an accountant. This resident had no relevant experience in teaching and commenced the TRP with doubts and uncertainties about her ability to teach. She showed no confidence at the start of the TRP, feeling *“very nervous because of lack of experiences”*, then appeared to gain some confidence during the first placement and finished this placement at a low to moderate confidence level, feeling that she was able to be more flexible and creative in her teaching. However, she found the second school placement to be particularly challenging, and her confidence remained unchanged from this level until the end of the program. The two variants of pattern 2 give some indications of how differences in initial experiences and feelings about the TRP helped to shape the residents’ confidence

during the program. The common features of the three residents exhibiting pattern 3a included being new graduates with no prior teaching experience. This group did not finish the program within the allocated time. For example, Jack needed to do more practicum in the same year while William and Sophia returned to the TRP for additional work in the following year.

Two residents, Grace and John evidenced in pattern 4. These residents began the program feeling moderately confident, however their confidence level then plateaued before it plunged to be lower at the end of the program. These residents appeared not to adjust to the second school placement, because they were less satisfied with their performance in the second placement.

4.3.3.2 *Confidence in lesson planning*

Learning how to plan lessons was a significant part of the residents' professional experience of the TRP. Lesson planning is an integral part of the knowledge of teachers, and is reflected in the WACOT Professional standards for Teaching. Residents' perceptions of their ability in lesson planning were assessed at various stages of the program as a measure of their professional knowledge. The findings are summarised in Figure 4.19 and show that, in general, the TRP had positively impacted on the resident's perceptions of their ability in lesson planning

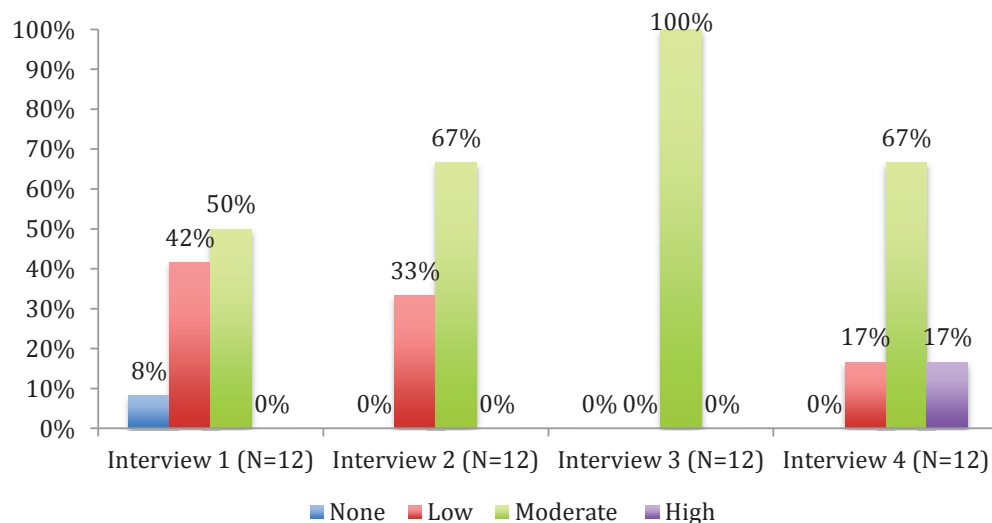


Figure 4.19: Residents' confidence level in lesson planning

At interview 1, 50% of the resident cohort were quite concerned about lesson planning, while 50% were feeling comfortable with it. By interview 2, residents seemed to have experienced some growth in confidence as the moderate category had increased to 67%. The data suggest that most of the residents become fairly confident and were able to follow the guidelines of the curriculum, and obtain access to diverse teaching resources. For example, Grace who became very confident with long-term planning, noted: *“I wouldn’t mind having a go at making a program plan for the whole year”*.

By the second placement, all residents felt that they were able to handle lesson planning effectively, as demonstrated by 100% in the moderate category in interview 3. While in interview 4, conducted upon completion of the program, 17% of the residents indicated they had low confidence and an overwhelming 84% were feeling quite positive about their ability to plan.

Individual confidence scores for lesson planning changed considerably during the course of the TRP. Figure 4.20 on the following page presents the scores for lesson planning for each of the 12 residents.

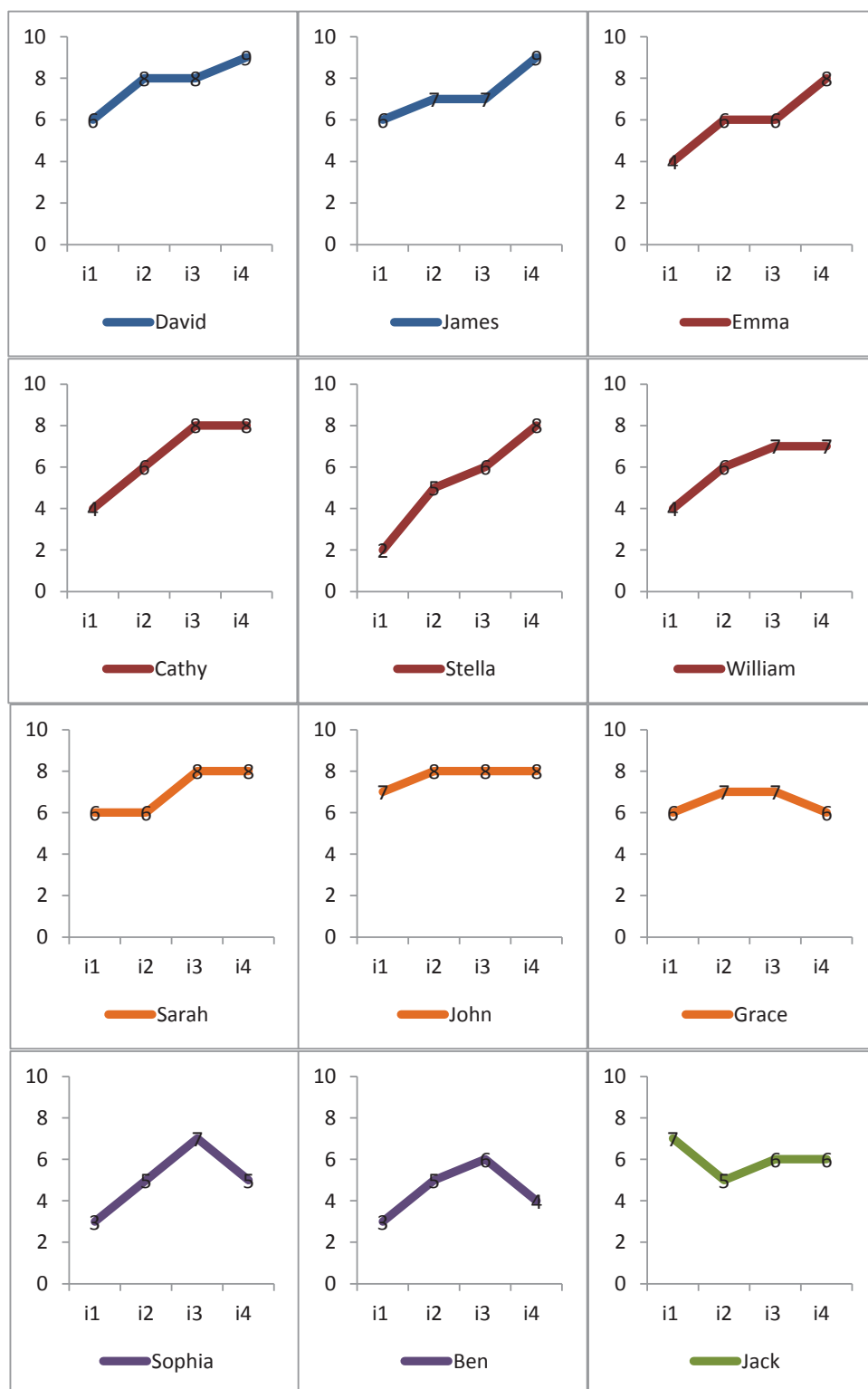


Figure 4.20: Graphical representation of resident's confidence in lesson planning

Figure 4.20 illustrates the trend of change for residents' perceptions of their confidence in lesson planning at various stages of the program. Two patterns are evident with one showing a consistent increase over time, and the other remaining flat, or constant. There is an even distribution of these two patterns among the 12 residents.

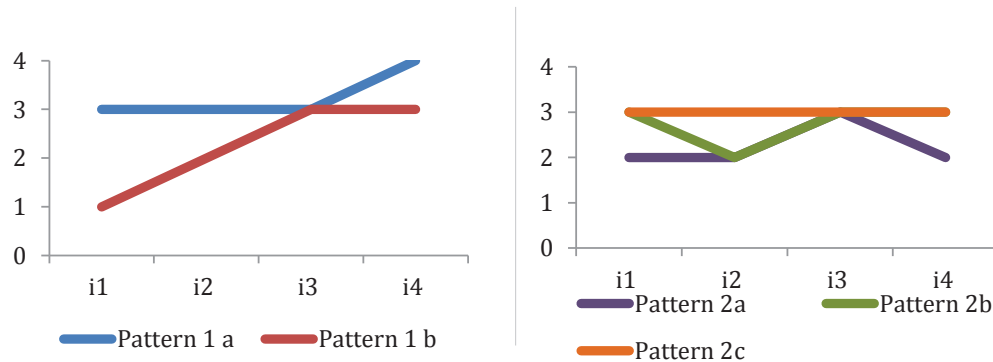


Figure 4.21: Pattern 1 for resident's confidence level in lesson planning

Pattern 1 represents the trajectory for David, Emma, Stella, James, Cathy and William (N=6), who exhibited a consistent growth of confidence in lesson planning throughout the TRP. Patterns 1a and 1b demonstrate the variance of growth. Residents like David and James represented in pattern 1a felt very confident about planning for teaching even at the beginning of the course. Their confidence increased to a high level by the end of the course as both of these residents made similar statements indicating that they did not have a problem with lesson planning. On the other hand, pattern 1b shows a lesser but gradual upward trend. Four resident's including Emma, Cathy, Stella and William demonstrated a relatively low confidence level at the beginning of the course. Stella in particular, had no confidence at all. These four residents all gradually become more and more confident with their planning skills and eventually reached a moderate level of confidence by the end of course, feeling capable of performing the task however they were still not completely confident.

Pattern 2 shows confidence levels for Sophia, Ben, Jack, Sarah, John and Grace (N=6) who appeared to have the same level of confidence in lesson planning from the beginning to the end of the program, suggesting that for these residents the impact of the TRP was less significant overall. Although they had experienced ups and downs in their confidence during the course, four of the residents, Sarah, Grace, John and Jack, retained the same moderate level of confidence at the end. In Ben and

Sophia's case, their confidence returned to the low level that they exhibited at the commencement of the program.

4.3.3.3 Confidence in classroom management

The results in the previous section on residents' perceptions of their professional learning indicating that classroom management as an important element of learning during the TRP. Learning how to create and maintain conducive classroom environments to support learning and teaching was perceived by the residents as one of the most significant achievements. In this subsection the researcher examines the resident cohort's confidence in classroom management and the pattern of changes of confidence for individual residents.

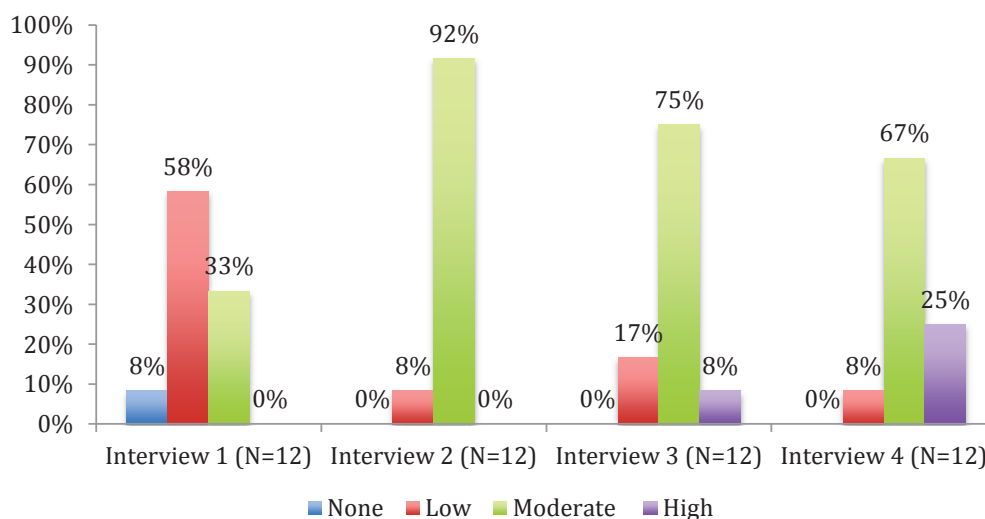
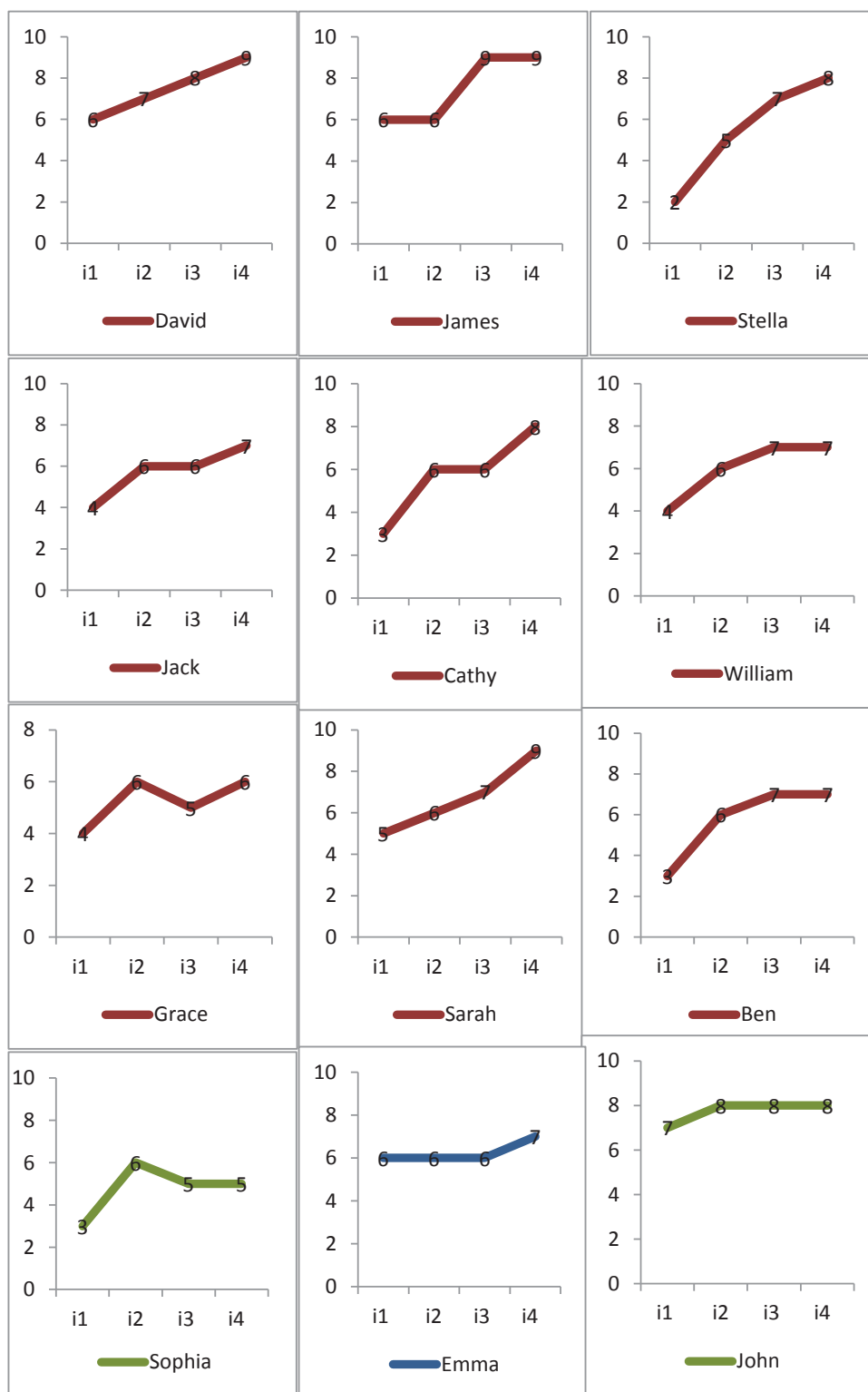


Figure 4.22: Residents' confidence level in classroom management

Figure 4.22 shows that in interview 1, 66% of the residents felt they were not comfortable with their ability to handle classroom management. But by the time they finished their first placement their moderate confidence level reached 92% of the residents indicated Moderate confidence. In interview 3 and interview 4 those exhibiting a moderate confidence level had decreased slightly, while 8% and 25% of the residents felt highly confident. This pattern suggests once the residents achieved considerable improvement in their mastery of classroom management they continued to maintain their confidence in this area. To further demonstrate individual difference, confidence scores for classroom management are presented in Figure 4.23 on the next page.



Note: 1-2= None 3-5=Low 6-8 Moderate 9-10=High

Figure 4.23: Graphical representation of individual resident's confidence in classroom management

There are noticeable differences among individual residents' perceptions of their ability to manage the class. While the majority of the residents experienced a boost of confidence from a low level, a few of them did start the program with a moderate level of confidence about classroom management. According to the data, the overall trends of resident confidence movement roughly fall into two patterns.

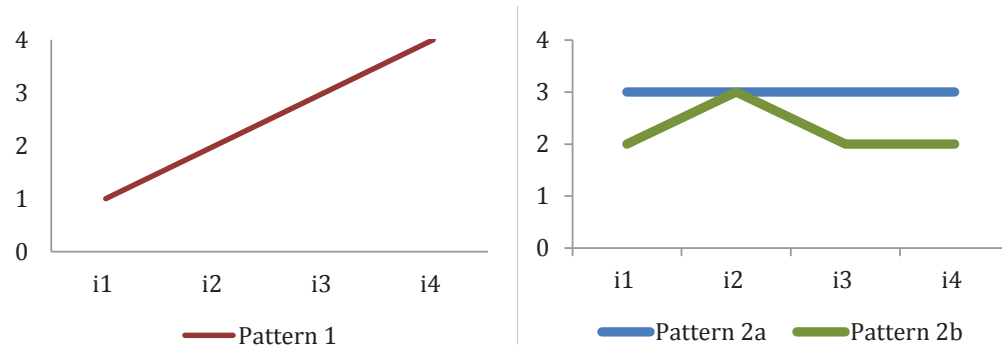


Figure 4.24: Pattern 2 of resident's confidence in classroom management

Pattern 1 represents a steady growth of confidence in managing the classroom for Stella, David, James, Jack, Sarah, Cathy, William, Ben and Grace (N=9). Five of them grew from low to moderate confidence level over the course of the TRP. Stella and Sarah appeared to have bigger learning curves. Stella had no confidence at all to begin with, but concluded the course with a moderate confidence score, whereas Sarah improved from low to high. David and James showed a gradual growth level as they improved from moderate to a high confidence level. Both of them indicated that if given a new class they would be able to cope. This pattern demonstrates that overall, as a result of the TRP, this group of residents became more confident as time went past, but their growth varied considerably.

Patterns 2a and 2b reflect three residents who appeared to show an unchanged confidence level on completion of the TRP. Although classroom management was a concern for 50% of the resident cohort, Emma and John both indicated at the beginning of the course they were quite comfortable in their ability to handle classroom management with a moderate confidence score. John said "*I had no problem with teaching an actual class and creating learning environment*". It appeared that John and Emma's early optimism came from their previous work experience related to teaching. Prior to the TRP, John had a practicum as a sport teacher for his undergraduate sport science degree, and Emma had had experience in delivering an asthma training course to practising nurses. Emma and John

maintained the same moderate level of confidence on completion of the course. As a contrast, Sophia as a fresh graduate with no teaching experience at all prior to the course, felt very unconfident with her ability to handle a class at the beginning, and she was still concerned about it by the end, despite an increased confidence score when she finished the first placement. These results suggest that teaching experience did have an influence on residents' perceptions about their abilities, particularly at the beginning of the TRP.

4.3.3.4 Confidence in assessment

Student assessment is an indispensable routine part of teachers' work. This subsection examines the resident cohort's confidence in assessment and the pattern of change of their confidence throughout the TRP.

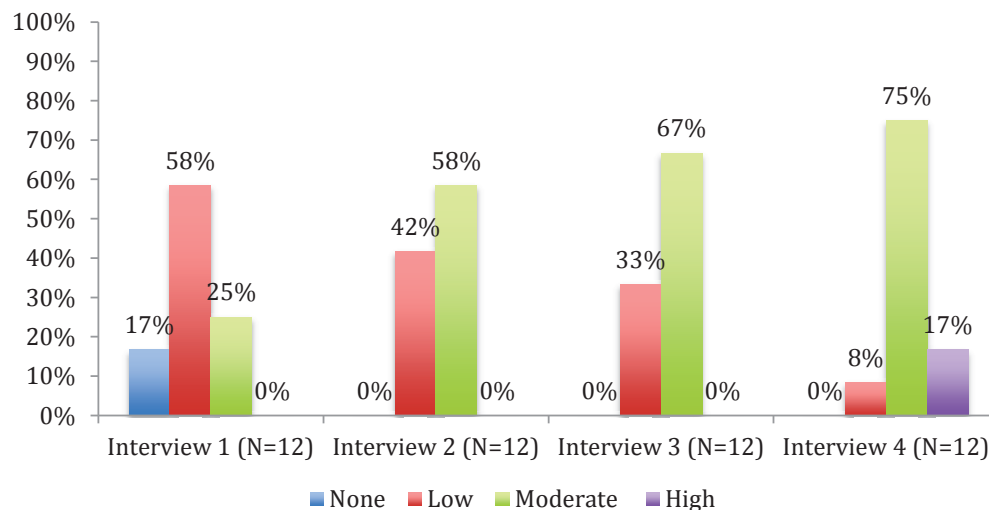


Figure 4.25: Residents' confidence level in assessment

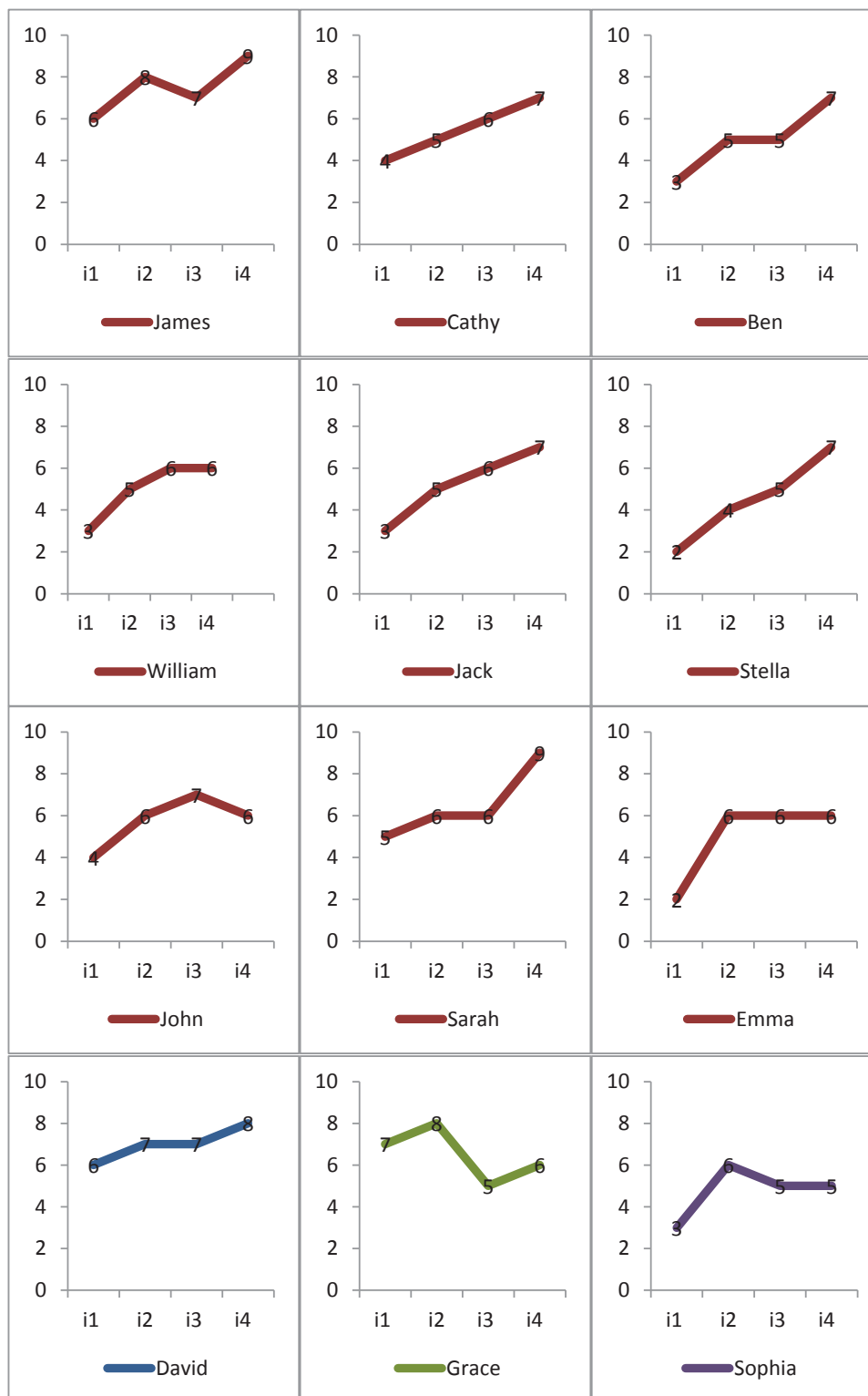
Figure 4.25 shows that residents' overall perceptions of their assessment ability trended upward trend. In interview 1, 75% of the residents indicated no or low confidence in their ability, suggesting assessment was one of their the weakest areas. However, the figure shows there was indeed a steady growth of their perceived confidence in assessment skills. In interview 2, 58% of the residents regarded themselves moderately confident. This suggests that the residents had developed a better understanding of assessment at the conclusion of the first school placement. Although residents felt more confident, the assessment tools they used were still quite limited. John, for example, asserted that his assessment skills improved only slowly over time, "*How to assess was very vague in my mind at the*

beginning. It is becoming more apparent". Emma also made similar a comment, *"I am starting to get my head around assessment, there is a long way to go but I am getting there"*.

Residents' confidence continued to grow, with 67% of residents feeling moderately confident by interview 3. At this stage the data showed residents were much more comfortable with assessment and they had to start develop a deeper understanding of the underlying significance of the various ways of doing assessment. David, for instance, commented in interview 3, *"...getting better...assessment is probably one area I can still improve on...but I am getting more specific with my outcomes for a lesson. ...I am able to assess specifically whether they achieve or not and using that for my next lesson"*.

The peak of residents' confidence in assessment was by interview 4, with a total of 92% being moderate to high. These results show that assessment was one of the areas that the TRP impacted on the most. Residents' confidence had grown even more substantially since interview 3, and they had been exposed to an even more diverse range of assessment tools, such as checklist, rubrics, and anecdotal notes. Nevertheless they were not fully confident, because nearly all the residents acknowledged there was still room for improvement. Cathy commented in interview 4, *"...my assessment is a lot stronger, but there is still room for improvement...need to read assessment better, and need know what to do with the information I've got."* David's comment from interview 4 gave more force to this, *"They are [assessment skills] improving and that can still get better. It is certainly not my strongest area. But I think comparing where I am now to where I was, it is a lot better. But it is something I need continuously work to and look for ways to do it better"*.

To further demonstrate individual difference, the residents' confidence scores for residents' assessment skills are presented in Figure 4.26 on the subsequent page.



1-2= None 3-5=Low 6-8=Moderate 9-10=High

Figure 4.26: Graphical representation of residents' confidence in assessment

Similar to lesson planning and classroom management, residents' confidence levels in assessing students had two common patterns, as presented in Figure 4.27.

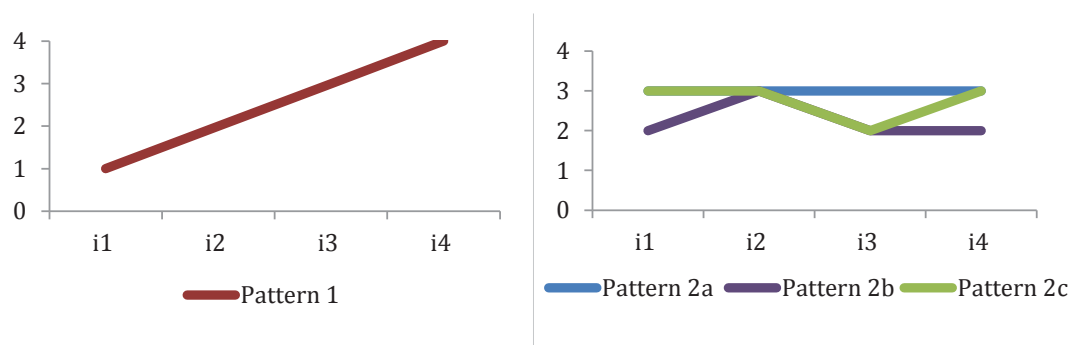


Figure 4.27: Pattern of individual resident's confidence in assessment

Figure 4.27 demonstrates the pattern of gradual growth for Stella, Jack, Sarah, Cathy, William, Ben, Emma, John and James (N=9) confidence in their ability to assess student learning throughout the whole course. The growth for five of them is from low to moderate confidence. Unlike others, Stella and Emma started with no confidence and ended up being the same as those five. James and Sarah were the only two, who indicated a high level of confidence at the end of the course. Sarah started with low confidence and James with moderate confidence; both finished with a high confidence score in the assessment of students. The results show assessment was perceived as the one of most difficult facets of teaching for the majority of the residents.

Pattern 2 represents three residents who appeared to show an unchanged confidence level in assessment by the end of the TRP as compared to the beginning of the course. While David (variant 2a) and Grace (variant 2b) were moderately confident throughout the TRP, Sophia (represented as variant 2c) was predominantly not confident in her ability to assess student learning. She started with low confidence just like most of her peers, but her confidence was still low at the end of the program despite a small improvement after finishing the first placement, which she acknowledged as the peak of her professional learning. At the end of the program, Sophia indicated she still felt *"half way there"*. Unlike Sophia, and most of his other peers, David felt pretty confident even when he started the course, and maintained the same level of confidence over the whole course. Completing the program, he felt good about his ability in assessment to assist and reflect on his teaching, saying *"I feel pretty confident about assessing where the students are at*

and trying to put programs in place to meet those needs. ...confident to be able to find solutions to address different learning activities”.

4.3.4 Summary of forming professional identity

In the previous section the researcher has described how residents thought about their self-image as a teacher, and their sense of belonging to placement schools and to the teaching profession. The researcher also explored in detail residents' confidence in various aspects of teaching and provided insights into how residents perceived their professional identity while they continued to grow as a teacher.

Comments made by the residents disclosed their understanding about becoming a teacher at different stages of the study. Their initial perceptions of self-image were predominately focused on the student relationship aspect of teaching. Then, once they started going to school, residents' perceptions of being “*kind and understanding*” changed because they encountered the consequences of being “*too laid back and friendly*”, which prompted them to readjust and contextualise their thoughts about the image of teacher. As residents progressed further in the course, their sense of conviction regarding being a teacher seemed to grow stronger, indicating their advancement in the development of their teaching skills and knowledge, which helped to generate a positive self-image. Overall the residents' comments provide good insights into their personal transformation in terms of how they viewed themselves a teacher.

In terms of their sense of belonging, it is broadly evident that residents in both placements 1 and 2 felt part of the school community. In general they felt embraced and supported as student teachers. The data also show that residents' overall sense of belonging to the teaching profession tended to grow stronger as they progressed through the course. Residents' feelings about the profession were also evidenced to be intricately related to their perceptions of the status of themselves in the school. Those who felt they were performing well in the placement and felt that they were assimilated into the school community, tended to have a good sense of belonging to the teaching profession and a stronger desire to be a teacher.

As for overall confidence, the data indicated a tendency for perceived growth on the part of the whole resident cohort. The identified patterns of confidence indicate residents started the program with various levels of confidence in their

ability to teach, with the majority feeling a low level. Towards the end of school placement 1, all residents' confidence was around the moderate level, evidencing a prevailing trend of growth. Conversely, the first half of school placement 2 witnessed a falling trend of confidence for most of the residents with only a few remaining moderately confident. During the second half of school placement 2, some residents' confidence levels increased and others decreased.

Specifically, in terms of confidence in lesson planning, the data indicated an apparent trend of gradual growth from the beginning until the middle of school placement 2, after which the majority continued to grow, reaching moderate or high levels of confidence, while two residents regressed as shown in pattern 2b in Figure 4.21.

For classroom management, as the residents progressed through the program their confidence in classroom management gradually increased with the majority of them feeling moderately confident at the end of the TRP. In the early stage, the majority of residents' confidence was low, but as they finished school placement 1, their confidence was elevated to moderate, and remained more or less unchanged for the remainder of the program. Not surprisingly this suggests school placement is the prime arena where residents tested out strategies, and acted out their conceptual beliefs of dealing with student behaviours.

Being distinctive from that of lesson planning and classroom management, residents' confidence in assessment demonstrated a positive trend throughout the TRP. In the early stage of the course, the majority of residents' were conscious of the perceived complexity of assessment and their lack of experience in doing it. Over time, residents' confidence increased steadily peaking at the end of the program to a moderate or high level. It seemed their confidence was boosted as they became aware of the significance of undertaking assessment, and using a wide range of tools and resources to assist teaching.

4.4 Key Findings about Residents' Perceptions of Professional Learning Experiences

In the foregoing sections, interview data were examined in depth to determine residents' ideas about various elements of their professional learning experience during the TRP. In this final section of the chapter the researcher presents

the key findings that emerged from the data with regard to residents' perceptions about professional learning and about their evolving sense of professional identity.

Residents' perceptions of their professional learning overall indicate multiple gains and achievements took place within the three domains of Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement. During the period of school placement 1, residents initially felt they had gained good understanding of students as they learned to build rapport with them, and get to know them as individuals. As residents moved to school placement 2, they started to learn a lot more about the curriculum planning and development in teaching. Towards the end of their study, whereas residents felt they their curriculum knowledge had benefited from their five-week final block practicum, they found themselves achieving a higher level of understanding of students' academic abilities, learning styles and developmental stages. Within the domain of Professional Practice, residents felt classroom management was consistently the central element of their learning throughout the course of their study. The other aspect they felt had improved was lesson planning and assessing student learning. This was evident during the period of school placement 1 and towards the end of school placement 2. Within the domain of Professional Engagement, the first half of school placement 1 witnessed substantial improvement in terms of residents finding out their strengths and weakness for teaching different year levels.

The second finding that emerged from the data is that residents' learning processes were permeated with both positive and negative learning experiences. During school placement 1 and early school placement 2 residents attributed their positive feelings about their learning process predominantly to having a good partnership with their mentor teacher and other school staff. Residents also felt pleased when they achieved good teaching outcomes in the classroom. Towards the end of the program, residents found the final block practicum as a whole was a positive learning experience for them. Alongside experiencing good episodes of learning, residents encountered an array of obstacles as well. For example, during school placement 1, residents were challenged mostly in the PE domain, where they struggled with issues at the personal level and the program level. At the same time, residents found that they had problems with coping with the heavy workload of the course. As they progressed to the first half of the second placement, residents felt

that classroom management was a major matter of concern. Despite the fact that partnership was perceived to be mostly a positive learning experiences, it also posed an obstacle to residents' development mainly within the period of school placement 2, especially if they experienced unsatisfactory mentoring. Over the consecutive five-week teaching block, residents found themselves struggling with planning for a wide range of academic abilities and also struggled with forward planning. Lastly, it was found that resident's experiences had substantially impacted on their views of their responsibilities of teaching and their own professional learning as a student teacher throughout the course.

With regard to their perceptions of professional identity, the residents' initial self-image as a teacher was based on their preconceived ideas about teaching. But they frequently re-evaluated and refined this self-image throughout the TRP. The data also demonstrates that the residents felt they became part of the school communities where they were placed, which helped them to view themselves as a member of the teaching profession.

Confidence in teaching as another dimension of resident's perceptions of their professional identities was found to be influenced by both personal traits and the contextual factors of residents' learning process. As a whole cohort, whereas residents felt their overall confidence had increased by the end of the course, the first half of school placement 2 was a challenging period when most of the residents felt less confident. The residents' confidence in lesson planning was found to show a trend of growth until residents started their five-week final block practicum, when there experienced either upward and downward trends until the end. Residents' overall perceptions about classroom management were mainly low at the beginning then grew to a moderate level of confidence at the end of school placement 1 and remained at the same level for the second placement. Unlike lesson planning and classroom management, residents' felt their confidence in assessment grew steadily throughout the course.

The findings that have been presented show the overall picture of residents' professional learning experience during the TRP. The meaning of these findings in relation to the research questions and how they mesh with the existing literature will be discussed in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 5:

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS: TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher focuses on transformative elements in residents' learning experience during the TRP, and thereby address research question two: *Do pre-service teachers' perceptions provide evidence of a transformative learning experience in the TRP?* The researcher analyses both the survey and interview data 1) determine whether there was evidence of transformative learning occurring; 2) identify whether the trends in learning that occurred throughout the TRP were consistent with informative and/or transformative change processes, and 3) describe what the characteristics of the transformative elements of residents' learning processes were.

Following this introductory section, the results are presented in three main sections, each of which is devoted to examining residents' perceptions about various aspects of teaching and learning. Section 5.2 presents the survey data and provides an overview of the residents' experience during the TRP in relation to the stages of transformative learning proposed by Mezirow (1991). These data were drawn from Section C (Professional Learning Experience) of both surveys that were conducted at the end of the first and the second school placement. Section C of each survey included questions about learning incidents. The questions were designed to elicit responses to indicate whether or not the residents' learning experiences were consistent with the precursory steps to transformative learning. Section 5.3 presents the interview data providing details of the residents' experience during the TRP. The data are examined to identify any changes in residents' perceptions about teaching. These data include responses to open-ended questions asked of the 23 residents who took part in the second survey, as well as interview data collected from interviewing 12 residents four times throughout the TRP. These 12 interview participants were a subset of the participant cohort. Section 5.3 also includes personalised accounts of two residents' learning during the TRP. These two case studies are used to illustrate individual variations in informative and/or transformative learning experienced by the residents as they progressed through the course. The case studies are conducted

to exemplify the two residents' learning paths. A descriptive account of the resident's learning experiences is presented before the analysis of their learning using the four-staged transformative learning framework outlined in Chapter Three. The last section of this chapter is a summary of the key findings derived from residents' perceptions in terms of transformative learning. Finally, the researcher draws conclusions about whether or not transformative learning occurred, and about the characteristics of transformations that took place in residents' learning process.

5.2 Residents' Perceptions About Transformative Learning Incidents

In this section the researcher describes the resident cohort's overall perceptions about their learning experience during the TRP drawn from responses to questions in Section C (Professional Learning Experience) of Surveys 1 and 2. In the survey learning incidents were selected to reflect components of the theoretical model of transformative learning. For example, residents were given the options of *never*, *seldom*, *often*, and *very often* to respond to the learning incident seven: *I found I could try out new ideas with my teaching and I felt confident with my teaching*. This learning incident was modelled on Mezirow (1991) claim that trying new roles and building competence and self-confidence was a significant aspect of a learner's transformation. The frequencies of each learning incident from surveys 1 and 2 are presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Resident cohort's (N=23) Perceptions about their Learning Experience

Incidents	Never to Seldom (%)		Often to Very Often (%)	
	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 1	Survey 2
Questioned my way to teach	39	22	61	78
Questioned my ideas about teaching	35	26	65	74
Beliefs and expectations were challenged	43	22	57	78
Found practice inconsistent with beliefs held	65	74	35	26
Prior ideas are challenged by TRP	87	43	13	57
Tried out new ideas and be more confident	4	17	96	83
Adopted new approaches	9	4	91	96
Changed practice based on feedback	0	4	100	96
Thought over decisions made in teaching	0	4	100	96

As shown in Table 5.1, 61% of the resident cohort in survey 1 reported that they experienced situations that often or very often caused them to question the way they taught, and 65% questioned their ideas about teaching. This suggests residents' experiences in the first school placement corresponded with what Mezirow (1991) described as the stage of "disorienting dilemma". In survey 2 the frequencies of these incidents increased to 78% and 74% respectively, suggesting that the residents continued to experience further disorienting dilemmas as they moved on to the second placement.

In survey 1, 57% of the residents responded that they often found their beliefs and expectations about teaching were challenged, whereas only 35% of them found their teaching practice varied from their beliefs about teaching. This indicates that while the residents engaged in a critical assessment of their prior ideas, beliefs and assumptions about learning and teaching, their teaching practices were still bound by their previous belief system. In survey 2, the residents appeared to be more involved in critical reflection as in the second half of the TRP 78% of the respondents reported their beliefs and expectations about teaching were challenged. Interestingly, at this juncture only 26% of the residents thought their practice were inconsistent with their beliefs. This suggests that the majority of residents (74%) felt that their practice had been transformed to conform with the expectations of the program.

Limited evidence was found in survey 1 regarding residents' discontent of their existing meaning perspectives as only 13% revealed that they felt uncomfortable with ideas they had about teaching after they started the TRP. Nevertheless, there was a marked increase to 57% in survey 2. This indicates the overall TRP experience had enabled residents to make meaning of their new experience and to critically examine their old meaning perspectives when presented with new evidence and opportunities for learning.

When it came to "trying out new ideas and be more confident", an overwhelming 96% of the residents in survey 1 responded positively with a slight decrease to 83% in survey 2. And 91% of residents felt they often "adopted new approaches" in survey 1 and this rising to 96% in survey 2. These results imply the residents continuously developed inclusive and integrative new meaning perspectives over the course of the TRP.

As for "Changed practice based on feedback" all the residents in survey 1 signed up, indicating that as residents came to an acceptance of their new roles and understanding about teaching and learning, they started to integrate these within their practice by consciously thinking through the decisions they made in teaching. The slight decrease in these learning incidents evident from survey 1 to survey 2 suggests that these processes may have begun to be internalised.

Overall, the results from both surveys indicate strongly that the residents had experienced learning incidents that were consistent with transformative learning. To assess this further the researcher examined the interview data for evidence of transformative learning, in particular for *what* had been transformed. Since transformative learning involves a shift in perspective, the researcher needed evidence of residents' changes of assumptions, beliefs and propositions. Therefore, data about residents' changes in terms of how they understood learning and being a teacher are presented in the subsequent sections. These data were partly drawn from responses to the open-ended questions in survey 2, and partly from answers to the last few questions of interviews 2, 3 and 4. The results will later be compared with the survey data and with the two case studies.

5.3 Residents' Perceptions of Perspective Change

Evidence of perspective transformations was elicited from responses to questions about residents' perceptions of their personal changes. For example, in survey 2 residents were invited to describe their views of teaching at the end of their program. And a series of questions at the end of each interview asked for changes in residents' perceptions about their values and beliefs of learning and teaching. Residents were encouraged to comment on whether they had struggled with their ideas or values or whether they had experienced any changes during the course of the program.

5.3.1 Survey data

In the open-ended questions section of survey 2, each resident from the cohort was asked, "Thinking back to the beginning of the program, to what extent do you think your views of teaching have changed? i.e. Has your view about you and your teaching changed as a result of the program? Please elaborate." Eighteen of 23 residents who took part in the second survey responded to this question, and all but one acknowledge their views about teaching had changed as a result of their experience during the TRP; furthermore 27 relevant comments were collated. Figure 5.1 below shows those aspects of teaching in which residents indicated a change of view, each column represents the number of comments collated.

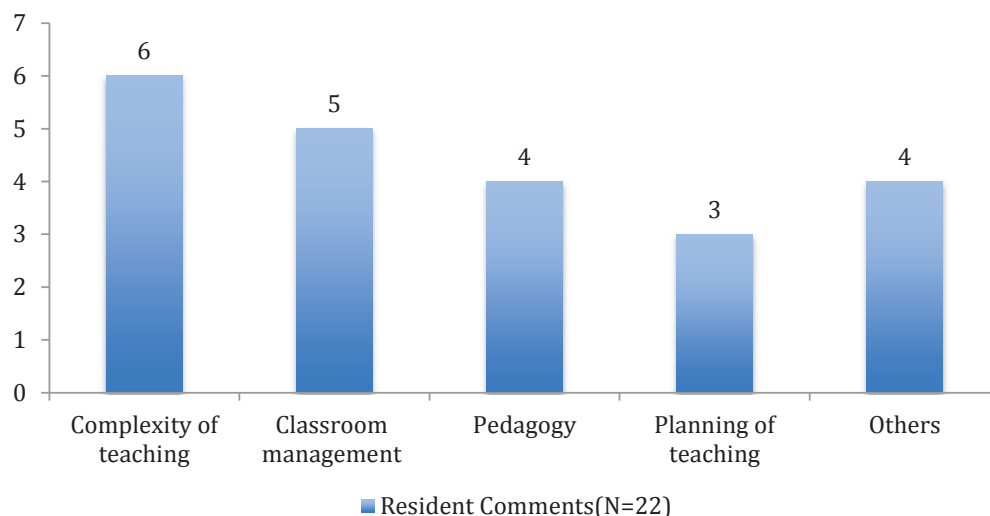


Figure 5.1: Resident cohort's perception about change

The most-mentioned (N=6) change was residents' awareness of the complexity and the demanding nature of teaching. As one Resident pointed out, "I

always knew it was a lot of work, but I now realise there's a lot more work involved in planning lessons and teaching in general". Residents also become more conscious about what teaching really entailed, as one of them said, *"I now have a much bigger picture of what teaching is and how detailed the role is"*. Classroom management was the second highest aspect (N=5) in which residents had experienced a change of views. Being continually immersed in a classroom environment over the year, the residents had many opportunities to try out, modify and reuse strategies they had attained from various sources. As the residents gradually deepened their knowledge about students' behaviours, residents were able to develop new understandings of classroom management. One resident remarked, *"I think all my views have changed with teaching. Behaviour management changed my views on how to treat students and what the best approach is for troubled students"*. Some residents' reported they had changed their pedagogical belief (N=4) such as direct instruction and collaborative teaching. One representative comment was, *"My view has changed considerably. I now know about direct instruction and best practice, which I had no knowledge of before"*. Residents also felt their expectations of planning for teaching had changed not realising *"how hard planning was"* and *"the amount of work involved in planning lesson"*. There were also four discrete comments by residents on their change of views about the learning abilities and styles of students, appreciation for the teaching profession, and the importance of maintaining their personal health during the TRP.

Five responses about change were about residents' confidence in their ability to teach. As these responses were more relevant to residents' perceptions about their self-image as a teacher, the researcher left them out of the shown in Figure 5. However, it should be mentioned here that these comments reflected a stronger sense of residents' faith in themselves as a teacher. One resident commented, *"I now feel confident to take on a class while I was still not confident at the end of term 3"*. For another resident, confidence seemed to extend to the unknown domain of teaching, *"...from my last survey, in which I wasn't feeling confident, I now feel confident not only in what I know but what I don't know. I know where to look for help and what I need to learn"*. These responses suggest that the TRP had profoundly impacted on the residents as they had developed deep awareness of their learning.

Despite that the majority of the residents stated their views had changed to a certain degree. However, James, who was one of the interview participants, specifically said his views had not changed at all. In the interview James indicated that as a mature-age resident he considered doing the TRP course as a stepping-stone for landing a teaching job. It appeared that he had a well-established set of understandings about teaching as a result of more than ten years of experience in TESOL training. His preconceived ideas seemed to be compatible with what he learned during the TRP; therefore he felt there were no substantial changes to his mindsets regarding teaching. James' case served as evidence that residents' individual attributes also impacted on their learning process and learning outcomes.

5.3.2 Interview data

Data from the 12 residents who were interviewed at four intervals throughout the TRP included response to a set of questions designed to capture the nature of residents' learning that the residents had engaged in. These questions were asked in interview 2, 3 and 4 as listed below.

Interview 2

Question 11: Thinking back over your learning to teach so far, have you had times when you were struggling with your ideas or values about teaching? Please briefly describe those experiences.

Question 12: What did you do about those experiences?

Question 13: How did you feel about those experiences?

Interview 3

Question 10: Have any of your values, beliefs or expectation about teaching and learning changed?

a. What triggered them?

b. What did you do about those changes?

c. How did you feel about those changes?"; and

Question 11 To what extent do these changes affect how you teach?"

Interview 4

Question 9: Have any of your values, beliefs or expectations about teaching and learning had changed after your block placement?

a. What triggered them?

b. What did you do about those changes?

C. How did you feel about those changes?

Question 10: To what extent did these changes affect how you taught during your block placement? Please elaborate.

In what ways? Did you integrate new perspectives into your teaching?
Question 11: Will these changes inform your teaching in the future?”

Although residents’ responses to these questions varied, the results suggest that residents underwent perspective changes about several issues, which roughly fall into four different themes: 1) seeing teaching differently; 2) seeing classroom management differently; 3) seeing students differently; 3) seeing the teaching profession differently. In what follows, different aspects of learning within each theme will be presented, with supporting quotes by the residents drawn from the data. In the discussion relating to the learning experiences that involved residents’ change of teaching perspective, the researcher will comment on whether they were informative or transformative. The purpose of analysing these data was to determine the transformative elements in residents’ learning process.

5.3.2.1 Theme one: seeing teaching differently

The first theme that emerged from the data was residents’ views about whether teaching had changed as a result of their learning experience during the TRP. Individual differences in residents’ responses to teaching and the categorisation of their learning experiences are summarised in table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Categorisation of Learning Experience — Theme One

Aspects of learning	Descriptive quote	Informative	Transformative
Adapting to real teaching situation	At the moment you actually need a reward and punishment system, otherwise there is no incentive for people to do good, and unfortunately there is no consequence for students who do badly. (Sophia, interview 3)	Elaborating existing frame of reference	
Demands of teaching	I didn't really realise how much planning and how much assessment went in... (Sarah, interview 3)	Elaborating existing frame of reference	
	It was just so much more work than I ever thought it would have been, and so much more like realising the kids and the parents expect you to know everything ... (Sarah, interview 4)	Elaborating existing frame of reference	
	I didn't realise at the beginning of the course how the big a job a teacher did. (Ben, interview 4)	Learning new frame of reference	
The dynamics of teaching	I thought it would be the same level over the whole year... (John, interview 3)	Learning new frame of reference	
Adjusting teaching to cater for student needs	...make sure everyone can do something, and leave no kids behind... (Sarah, interview 2)	Elaborating existing frame of reference	
Teaching is based on curriculum	I didn't really think curriculum was that far ingrained into the outcomes of what the student need to learn. (John, interview 4)	Learning new frame of reference	
Respect for different teaching style	I've come to realise that teachers have different methods of teaching, you do need to respect those because it is a teaching community. (William, interview 2)	Learning new frame of reference	
Understanding of teaching	It feels more like a business, everything just kind of crammed in, and the kids have just to learn it. It is not about fun anymore... (Sarah, interview 4)		Transforming point of view
Literacy teaching	They weren't at the level to learn that sort stuff yet so that you couldn't teach it, even though that's what you want to do within your philosophy. (John, interview 4)		Transforming habit of minds

The above comments from five residents evidenced changes in their views about teaching. While the majority of the changes that the residents mentioned were informative, two residents' comments evidenced the occurrence of transformative learning.

Residents talked about how they saw teaching differently in various interviews. For example, Sarah and Ben made similar comments that the demands of teaching exceeded their expectation. Sarah said in interview 3, *"I think what I thought is totally different from what I am doing now. In my head before I started teaching I thought it was gonna be really easy. I didn't realise how much planning and how much assessment went in...now I value all the organisation and make sure I keep all the different learning activities are going towards something"*. It is clear that by interview 3 Sarah realised her prior views about teaching were overly simplistic. Commenting on what teachers are expected to do, she said, *"It was just so much more work than I ever thought it would have been, and so much more like realising the kids and the parents expect you to know everything, just know everything on the top of your head, like an encyclopaedia"*. Ben in interview 4 made an almost identical comment, *"I didn't realise at the beginning of the course how the big a job a teacher did. There is a lot that teachers are expected to do in the class, but I didn't realised how big the job was"*. For Sarah, it was considered as elaboration of existing frame of reference whereas for Ben it was learning a new frame of reference.

Sophia commented that her learning to adapt her teaching to real situations required an elaboration of an existing frame of reference. She indicated that through doing behaviour management assignments, she had learned to understand it is advisable to give students choice and use encouragement to stop student misbehaviours, rather than use a heavy punishment and reward system. Yet, to her surprise, she found her second placement school relied heavily on reward system. Though feeling bewildered because her earlier learning did not translate into practice, she realised she needed to adapt her teaching style to the school's practice, she said, *"At the moment you actually need a reward and punishment system, otherwise there is no incentive for people to do good, and unfortunately there is no consequence for students who do badly"*. Although this could be potentially aligned to theme two: classroom management, it is more relevant to theme one: seeing teaching differently, because her views about managing student behaviours did not

change. Instead, she extended her understanding about the need to adjust her teaching style, in particular classroom management strategies, to the teaching environment of the school. Sophia said in interview 3, *“I would prefer to use encouragement than the reward system but being in a school that uses a reward system, the students actually need incentives to learn”*. Thus Sophia’s views of teaching changed in the sense that she came to understand best practices were not universally applicable to all teaching situations.

William’s comments in interview 2 about respecting other teachers’ teaching styles also evidenced learning a new frame of reference. William acknowledged in the interviews that initially he tended to be “quite opinionated” and sometimes he would have doubts about other teachers’ ways of teaching. Yet by interview 2, he had learned to respect other teachers, especially teachers who have been teaching for twenty or thirty years. He said, *“I’ve come to realise that teachers have different methods of teaching, and you do need to respect those because it is a teaching community...you can’t really just say ‘You are not teaching properly’, so I am coming to terms with that and trying to be more diplomatic about that”*.

In interview 3 John made comments about how his attitude towards teaching had changed. These comments reflect the emergence of a new frame of reference. John indicated the variety of things he had to learn, and what he was able to do in teaching was much more than he expected. He said, *“I thought it would be the same level over the whole year, but it’s grown because of the different things I am learning, different techniques and different ways to do different things...I think that constant choice and the ability to change yourself according to your class is always encouraging”*. In addition to John’s change of attitude towards teaching in general, John had a new frame of reference about the role of curriculum in teaching. His prior assumption was rather naïve, he said: *“I didn’t really think curriculum is that far ingrained into the outcomes of what the student need to learn. I just thought it was more the teachers sort of pick what you will be doing for the year, or the school would pick what you will be doing for the year, and you link to the curriculum then. I didn’t think it was curriculum based, and you can use curriculum straight out... I didn’t have that in my mind when I started this”*.

John’s changed philosophy about teaching literacy reflected a transformation of habit of minds. He was placed in a school where there was a literacy block and

students' learning was streamed. John was assigned to the low-level stream and his ideas about literacy teaching were disrupted. He said, *"I kind of had in my head that the students need to get a full grasp of all the literacy strengths, like comprehension, all that sort of stuff, so, that was my idea of what the students need to know. But going to [name of school] and seeing the levels of the students in the classroom, I realised they wouldn't be at the level to learn that stuff yet so that you couldn't teach it"*. John started to be critical with his prior assumption, saying, *"Even though that's what you wanted to do within your philosophy, and that's like your philosophy of teaching literacy, you can't do it because they won't learn"*. To further reinforce his new understandings, John looked for new options for teaching literacy and had some success implementing them. He said, *"I had a lot more work to do because I had to sort of make up my own priorities within literacy ...make up a different approach to how I would teach it and I would get them at the level I wanted to get them at..."*. He further commented, *"It worked out well. I kind of got to a little routine of how they actually learned and how they took everything on"*. John's ability to in adjust his teaching philosophy to accommodate the levels of students in literacy gave some positive perspectives. He said, *"It would positively inform my teaching, just because of the state of the students at [name of school], that's a huge learning curve within itself...I am happy to have had those experiences"*.

Sarah is another Resident who had transformed her points of views about teaching, starting with being caught in a disorienting dilemma about what should be taught and how students should be taught in school. She said, *"In my head at the beginning I always thought I'd like to teach more geography and more cooperative learning. Since doing it [the practicum], it's just like you don't have time for anything but literacy and maths, and everything else is just gets pushed around"*. Sarah was *"a little shocked"*. Sarah's own schooling experiences appear to have been caused this dilemma. She said, *"A lot of my beliefs come from how I was raised in my primary school, we did a lot of geography, we did Latin and French and all these different things... now at school it has moved so far away from that...it feels more like a business, everything just kind of crammed in, and the kids just have to learn it"*. For Sarah this approach to teaching in school was based on curriculum requirements instead of on motivating students to learn and catering for the needs of students. She said, *"It is not about fun anymore, it's more about just assessing them,*

do that and get it covered... instead of spending time really [on the students]. So I guess that changed a lot. I thought it would be more about... instead of just pushing them on or 'Oh you haven't got this content, but you are going to year three anyway'. I thought it would more 'You need to spend more time doing this'. It should focus more on the kids, whereas I feel like in reality it is more focused on the adults" Confronted by such realities, Sarah did not just conform but she adapted to the situation. This was evident in her comments that she tried to incorporate geography into one of her literacy lessons in which students had to connect a text they read to things happening in the world.

Sarah's views were further challenged when she noticed each of her mentor teacher only focused on one learning area, either maths or literacy, without showing much interest in other learning activities at all like sports. This again was a puzzling situation for Sarah because she believed students should be exposed to broader learning activities. Yet the data demonstrates that Sarah turned it into a meaningful learning experience, which shaped her views of practice. She said, *"I'll try and make sure even if I am maybe not interested in something, that it is still incorporated, because the kids need it, rather than just thinking 'I just wanna do this and focus on that'. I hope I will be more open to looking at different things and trying different things to see what sort of works I guess, and just be confident going with that"*.

To sum up, Sarah's transformation of point of views took the form of developing deeper insights about teaching. She indicated greater awareness of adjusting her teaching to the real classroom context, and reinforced her view that teaching should not be focused on her own or any other teachers' preference but rather on the learning needs of the students.

5.3.2.2 Theme two: seeing classroom management differently

The second theme that emerged from the data, as presented in Table 5.3, is that residents' views about classroom management had undergone some changes as a result of the TRP.

Table 5.3: Categorisation of Learning Experience — Theme Two

Aspects of learning	Descriptive quote	Informative	Transformative
Classroom management	From the beginning of the year I didn't realise how much behaviour stuff you have to sort of know, whereas now I understand how much you need and how important it is. (Sarah, interview 3)	Learning new frame of reference	
	...the behaviour management sides of things blow me away... (John, interview 3)	Learning new frames of reference	
Strict approach to disciplining	They were a little bit scared to break the rules, which actually worked in the teacher's favour. (Grace, interview 2)	Learning new frames of reference	
Classroom management	When I looked at controlling a classroom before, I never thought any of those worked, but I haven't drawn a defined line of where I stood. (Stella interview 2)	Learning new frames of reference	
Dealing with extreme student behaviours	I really realised that I needed to change my attitude to how I view them, which then correspond to how to interact and deal with their burst of behaviours. (Stella, interview 4)		Transforming habits of minds

Four of the 12 residents interviewed indicated changes in their views about classroom management, but the impact of their learning experiences on their views varied considerably. Three residents experienced informative learning, and one experienced both informative and transformative learning. In interview 3 Sarah and John indicated that they had realised that classroom management was much more important than expected. This was evidence of informative learning through the development of a new frame of reference about classroom management. For example, Sarah explained in interview 3 that through her observations about how students responded differently to those teachers who used, or did not use, behaviour management strategies, she had come to appreciate there was a lot to learn about classroom management. She said, *"From the beginning of the year I didn't realise how much behaviour stuff you have to sort of know, whereas now I understand how much you need and how important it is."* Similarly, Grace acquired a new frame of reference about the benefit of having a strict approach to classroom management. At the very beginning of her first school placement, Grace felt the teacher she worked

with was too strict with the students, saying “*they are just babies*”. Yet in interview 2, Grace had come to realise that being strict with the students was not necessarily a bad idea, saying, “*They were a little bit scared to break the rules, which actually worked in the teacher’s favour*”. This was a new insight for Grace as it was different from her prior assumptions shaped by her “motherly and nurturing nature”. For Stella, classroom management was a major area of learning. She acquired a new frame of reference about adopting a stance in managing the classroom, and achieved a transformation of her habit of mind related to dealing with extreme student behaviour. Stella had “eye opening” experiences with classroom management in general. Stella’s prior perceptions were more focused on the two ends of the continuum, one being very strict, and the other allowing student too much choice. She said in interview 2, “*When I looked at controlling a classroom before. I never thought any of those worked, but I had not drawn a defined line of where I stood*”. Through observing her mentor teacher, Stella’s prior presuppositions were contested because she realised there were ways to achieve a balance in her approach to managing the classroom. She said, “*By watching my mentor, I learned a lot from the way that how she handles it. She is sort of in the middle. The way she’s defined it, I now realise, yes, that’s the way I agreed with*”. This was an informative learning experience for Stella, because she made an addition to her existing frame of reference. Stella’s transformative learning was evidenced in her advanced understanding about handling problematic student behaviours. Stella’s transformative learning started with having an encounter with a particular child, which she recalled in interview 4 “*didn’t end well*”. The encounter triggered Stella to reassess her beliefs about mischievous students and look for new options for dealing with them. Reflecting on what she thought would have worked better, and on observing three to four different teachers interacting with students, Stella said, “*They are children and children have problem. Underneath all their problems they are beautiful persons and they want to learn. With everything else going on they are just acting out*”. Stella also started to explore other options for dealing with students. She said, “*I realised that I needed to change my attitude to how I view them, which then corresponds to how to interact and deal with their burst of behaviours*”. Stella implemented her new plan by changing her strategy completely in her teaching and it was effective. She said, “*Instead of constantly turning to this one child and saying ‘look, stop it, and get on task’. As soon as you spoke like that to her, that was it. It*

was on. She definitely becomes disruptive on purpose to get underneath your skin. So how I addressed this student would be more on a one to one, so I'll finish what I am doing, and then I'll go, 'You need to get on with what you are doing, and stop distracting the others'. It is the difference in tone that made a world of difference. If you keep picking her out in front of anyone, then that fed her, because she was getting the attention. There were three other students in the class who would then start to laugh with her". From the successful trial of her new role, Stella had built competence and self-confidence in dealing with extreme student behaviours. She said, "It was good. It made me more relaxed around the students. Whereas before I was on edge that they were going to do something and I don't know how to respond. This way it makes me a bit more relaxed. I still wasn't completely relaxed around them, because they could explode at any moment and they could take everyone with them, but it allowed me to understand a bit more". Stella's learning process was considered as a transformation of her habit of mind because it provided her with a new principle to interpreting student behaviours. As she said, "I think at the start of the year, I would have reacted to the behaviour, whereas now I got to react to the child and their circumstance." It was transformative also because her practice was dictated by her new perspective, she said, "It has given me some insights of how to handle students like this and seeing both ways of how it can go, it helps me to make that decision in the class when it counts so it doesn't become disruptive".

5.3.2.3 Theme three: seeing students differently

The third theme about change of views, which emerged from the data presented in Table 5.4, was that residents tended to see students differently as a result of their experience during the TRP.

Table 5.4: Categorisation of Learning Experience — Theme Three

Aspects of learning	Descriptive quote	Informative	Transformative
Student relationship	The more I kind of invested positive energy into the kids the more they are willing to give back. (Ben, interview 2)	Elaborating existing frame of reference	
Diversity of student intellectual levels	The concept of variety within the classroom was way off; I didn't think it was that big. (John, interview 4)	Learning new frame of reference	
Understanding of students	I've learned to value everyone's personal differences. (William, interview 2)		Transformation of point of view

The data indicate that some residents experienced a changed view in their knowledge of students. Their comments demonstrate both informative and transformative learning. For example, Ben in his comments reported that his personal values regarding students were more affirmed as a result of his experiences. He said, *"I've always thought that if you treat people well they will treat you well. The more I kind of invested positive energy into the kids the more they were willing to give back. My values of what teaching needs to be based on and what teaching needs to be about have been affirmed"*. Ben's understanding about drawing a positive response from students to his teaching was consolidated because he gained verification through his teaching practice. It was not a departure from his previous perceptions, but an expanded affirmation. Thus, his learning experience was an elaboration of his existing frame of reference.

On the other hand, John's comment in interview 4 about the wide range of student intellectual levels was an indication of acquiring a new frame of reference. John's expectation about the diversity of students learning abilities was challenged by his experiences of being in the classroom and seeing how students performed in their learning. He said, *"The concept of variety [of intellectual level] within the classroom was way off [my expectation] I didn't think it was that big"*. This realisation derived from the immediate context of classroom teaching and learning, added a new frame of reference about students.

William's comments made in interview 3 also demonstrate a resident's transformative understanding of students. Whereas William used to have very limited knowledge of children, his experience during the TRP expanded his ideas substantially and eventually his point of view about students was transformed. However, only limited reflection of the transformation was evident. Thinking back to the beginning of the TRP, William said, *"I was really quite unfamiliar with how kids function. I now realise kids actually have a lot to share, not just teaching them, you can also learn a lot from them. I've learned to value everyone's personal differences. Everyone is unique and everyone has their own strength and weakness"*. William's self-reflective process of his new perspective was evident in his comments. He said, *"It is all about them really isn't it? You've gotta support them, you've gotta understand them. To work with them, you need to create opportunities"*. Being conscious of the difference of students, William was more focused on the individual learning, rather than just having eyes fixed on his own teaching. He said, *"I had no idea at the beginning...at the beginning I was just overwhelmed with trying to understand how things work, didn't have enough time to think of this...because you are aware of expectation and you are aware of outcomes. Now... I see more opportunities to engage students, using different techniques and styles"*. William's experiences in the TRP had transformed the way he saw students, which in turn informed his approach to teaching.

5.3.2.4 Theme four: seeing the teaching profession differently

The fourth theme about change of views emerging from the data presented in Table 5.4 was that residents had developed different perspective towards the teaching profession.

Table 5.5: Categorisation of Learning Experience — Theme Four

Aspects of learning	Descriptive quote	Informative	Transformative
Professionalism	Teachers really need to be aware of what they are modelling all the time. (Grace, interview 3)	Elaborating existing frame of reference	
Teaching as an enjoyable profession	I was still very sceptical when I started...but I've really learned you can have a lot of fun. (Ben, interview 3)	Learning new frame of reference	
Respect for professional boundaries	You've got professional boundaries you just don't cross over, you respect everybody's style. (Grace, interview 2)	Learning new frame of reference	
Accountability of teachers	I didn't realise until I started teaching that there is a definite swing for teachers to become more accountable and being more responsible for their roles as big as it is... (Grace, interview 3)	Learning new frame of reference	

Grace's data provides evidence of a shift in her perspective about the teaching profession. As a mature-age career changer, Grace tended to be rather attentive to teaching as a profession. Her learning experiences about the teaching profession comprised an elaboration of her existing frame of reference, and the development of a new frame of reference, which was that teachers were held accountable for they what they did. She said, *"I didn't realise until I started teaching that there is a definite swing for teachers to become more accountable and being more responsible for their roles"*. This reflects Grace's new understanding about the teaching profession. She said: *"My thought was I would see more people like that [treating teaching just like a job] than people genuinely wanting to help the kids. I really haven't seen that. I have definitely seen more people wanting to be there for the children – truly professional teachers"*. Another frame of reference that Grace acquired was that professional boundaries should be respected. In interview 2 Grace mentioned an incident when she disagreed with her mentor teacher regarding a student with attention deficit issues in the classroom. She struggled to find justification for her mentor teacher's decision not to put her at the front but she managed to cope with the situation and develop a new perspective. She said, *"Everyone in teaching supports everybody else, so you've got professional*

boundaries you just don't cross over, and you respect everybody's style". Grace also elaborated on her previous views about the teaching professionalism, saying she strongly believed teachers were role models and there should be no place for any actions that might have a negative influence on students. For example, in interview 3 she disclosed her conflicting dilemma between her personal belief and the alcohol-related jokes and the sarcastic humour about students she encountered at the placement school. She tried to settle her uneasiness by talking to the course coordinator at university, but the matter was not resolved properly and ended in an unexpected manner. Although Grace felt discouraged, she did not discard any of her previously held ideas and appeared to come to terms with the fact that changing these aspects of teacher behaviour was beyond her ability. Thus, while other teachers did not uphold the personal standards she did in their professional interactions, she accepted that it was not appropriate to make judgements of them. However, she believed that she could influence others more generally by setting an example. She said, *"I am really conscious of being a good role model with everything...I set a fairly high standard with that (of being role model) and I will meet that. I think that if I am in the right school, by meeting those standards that you do influence others..."*. It was evident that Grace's perspective of, and attitude toward, professionalism had been gradually deepened from a level of denial to acknowledgement and a strategic response.

Ben was another resident who experienced an informative change of idea about the teaching profession. He said, *"I now have more appreciation for the amount of enjoyment and the creativity you can get out of the teaching profession. I was still very sceptical when I started... but I've really learned you can have a lot of fun"*. This learning experience allowed Ben a new frame of reference for teaching though difficult it could be interesting and enjoyable.

5.3.2.5 Others: seeing oneself differently

Beyond the four themes outlined previously, Cathy's data revealed experiences that helped her to see herself differently. Cathy's growth of her inner-self indicated a transformation of her habit of minds. She started the TRP without much confidence and was doubtful of her ability, despite many years of work experience in schools. By the fourth interview, her comments provided a clear indication of a transformed way of seeing herself. She said, *"I got stronger. I would*

ask a lot of questions I should have asked at the beginning and I didn't. Whereas towards the end I asked them...I wasn't confident to ask... If I had asked her in first term, I feel it would have you been 'You should know that', whereas now I am like ' I should know that, but I don't know it. That's ok not to know it'. In the interview Cathy recounted turning to her mentor teacher for technical terms for teaching volume, shapes and faces for one of her lessons. This was an affirmative experience that enabled her to be more honest and open with herself. Her confidence in herself had greatly improved. She said, *"If I had had that lesson in first semester, I would have just not bothered, I would have just done what I could. Now I've got the confidence that I need to know"*. For some residents this did not seem to be a significant matter, but in Cathy's case it was a breakthrough in appreciating herself as a teacher and a confidence boost to her personal life. As she said, *"I can (now) say no to my children"*. Cathy's changed self-perception was indicative of transformative learning because she had revised her habit of mind by reinterpreting her sense of self in relation to teaching (Cranton, 1994). The researcher considers her experience as a significant transformation of self.

5.3.3 Summary

The resident interview data supported the findings of the open-ended questions in the survey, reflecting that considerable changes had taken place in the residents' mindsets about teaching and learning. Whereas the majority of the changes reported indicated a process of informative learning, transformative learning was also evident. The results show residents experienced informative and transformative learning in the areas of: finding out what teaching is like; and developing a deeper understanding of students, classroom management, and the teaching profession. This learning is consistent with learning across all three domains of Professional Knowledge (PK), Professional Practice (PP) and Professional Engagement (PE), included in the WACTO Professional Standards. These results are consistent with quantified interview data presented in Chapter Four. The data derived from the survey and interview confirms that residents learning comprised both informative and transformative learning experiences across all the professional learning domains for teaching. The occurrence of both informative and transformative learning in the TRP indicates the capacity of this approach in initial teacher preparation to enable residents to achieve the acquisition

of knowledge and skills for teaching, as well as to develop a deeper personal and professional understanding about students, learning, and teaching and the professional lives of teachers.

5.4 Case Studies

While perspective transformation is considered to be governed by social and cultural norms, it is operationalised at a personal level and likely to be context bound. To help understand these factors at the individual level, the researcher constructed two case studies to demonstrate the complex interplay between the programmatic and personal circumstances in the potential transformation of residents' thinking about learning and teaching. The case studies also help to highlight how residents' prior perceptions are transformed by their experience in the residency mode of study.

The two case studies were built from the data generated with Emma and Jack, which primarily were derived from the four interviews they had participated in. These two were selected because they presented contrasting learning experiences afforded by the TRP. They were both inspired by teaching and aspired to be good teachers. Emma was a mature career-changer to teaching with work experience in professional training. She demonstrated a tendency to be a reflective learner. Jack, on the other hand, was a young and inexperienced graduate from sport science. The two residents had very different personal attributes prior to the program, and manifested distinctive responses to the complex learning situations in the course, and achieved very different learning outcomes.

Each of the selected case studies represents an interpretation of the interview data. For both, a brief review of the year-long learning experience during the TRP is presented. This review is focused on the development of their professional knowledge and skills for teaching, and the challenges and barriers to learning that each reported about their experiences in various stages of the TRP. The review also includes an account of their engagement in the professional teaching community. After the review, some critical incidents of their learning are analysed to identify evidence that is consistent with the stages of transformative learning proposed by Mezirow (1991).

5.4.1 Emma's story

Table 5.6: Profile of Case Study Participant 1

Profile of Emma	
Age at time of participation	40
Gender	Female
Marriage status	Married
Education background	Art and nursing
Teaching experience	Nursing educator, interactive guide at art gallery

Emma had a background in art and nursing before entering the program. Commencing in 2007, she studied English and fine arts at university and was awarded a BA Hons Degree in 2010. Between 2004 and 2007, she was working for a local medical institution as a senior nurse. Emma had no formal school teaching experience but had been a professional educator within her capacity as a nurse. She had also been a volunteer in a state art gallery for over 3 years, where she worked as an interactive guide for school groups of all ages, and visitors from other countries to Australia. In 1997, she was a professional educator for a Commonwealth Asthma 3+ support program, for which she provided asthma education to health professionals, carers, individuals and students. In 2002, when she was a course coordinator and provided practice support for another medical institution, she was also involved in the provision of education and clinical support to practice nurses through education forums and mentoring. Compared to other residents who had had past experiences in classroom teaching in a formal school context, Emma is categorised as a mature career changer aged between 41 to 50 years with limited teaching experiences in the adult sector. Emma enrolled in the TRP because she thought the course was very practical. She particularly liked the idea that this program would provide opportunity for her to be part of the school community while learning to teach because she was trained as a nurse in a similar way 20 years ago.

5.4.1.1 *Review of Emma's year-long learning*

Entering the TRP - January

Before Emma started the TRP in January 2011, she had two main fears: behaviour management and maths. Previous negative experiences with maths as a child in school caused Emma to be frightened by the prospect of teaching maths.

Nevertheless, Emma was optimistic that she would be able to turn her less-desired personal experience with maths into a positive thing by reflecting upon those experiences to make sure she didn't repeat them with her future students. Emma therefore, showed signs of being a reflective learner when she entered the TRP. Classroom management was Emma's other concern; however, she believed she would be "*able to see things in practice, see what works and what doesn't work*".

Emma appeared to be predisposed to teaching approaches that were aligned with constructivist collaborative learning pedagogy. For example, she visualised herself teaching in a way that enabled the children to learn through experience and exploration. She wanted to work with children in small groups using collaborative activities. When discussing her philosophy, she explained, "*I think the reason I came into the course wanting to do constructivist cooperative learning is because whenever I go to the UK, I always buy the teaching magazines and have a look. That was very much what was being written about, and how the lesson was being planned. That kind of sounds interesting because that's how I learn. I learn by doing and by exploring and stuff. And simply being lectured at, doesn't always for me produce a good result. So that was kind of where my thinking was at. That was sort of like pre-starting the course*".

School placement 1 – February to June

By the time Emma finished her first four-week block practicum at the end of School Placement one, her perspectives of teaching seemed to have broadened substantially. She had deepened her understanding of the multifaceted roles associated with being a teacher. She also developed a much firmer stance than she originally envisioned for herself in her interaction with students. She was also surprised about how much time students spend at school outside of the classroom, particularly to attend various events in Catholic schools.

Emma also expressed confidence with her skills for teaching. When asked how confident she was about lesson planning, she said, "*I feel fairly confident because now I know where everything is*". However, the balance between the Australian curriculum and the Western Australian curriculum posed a difficulty for her. Over the course of the first semester Emma grew to be more confident in handling whole-class teaching. She felt there was room for improvement and

commented that she was still learning to: cater for different stages of learning; cope with different styles of learning; map different learning areas to the curriculum, and master behaviour management issues. She felt that she needed to address many aspects of teaching all at the same time, stating, “*at the moment I feel a little bit like a puppet, and I am sort of being pulled in all these different directions, but I am starting to take control of the puppeteer, rather than him controlling me so much. It is just trying to balance everything*”. This suggests that at this stage Emma had developed a good understanding of breadth of skills involved in handling whole class teaching.

However, during this period Emma was concerned about some of the classroom practices adopted by her mentor teacher’s use of an extrinsic reward system for student behaviours. This ran counter to the advice provided in her university studies. Emma also struggled with her own approach to classroom management. Although she had expected that classroom management would be an issue for her, she was initially overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problem. Fortunately this improved during the block practicum. Assessment was another *challenge that she encountered*, commenting, “*Assessment is probably the biggest thing, now I am starting to get my head around that...it is still developing, but it is a long way yet to go*”. She hoped that as she got more on top of classroom management, she would have more time to get around the classroom and provide students with formative feedback. In addition to these issues, Emma continued to feel intimidated by maths teaching. She was troubled by her lack of vocabulary when teaching maths above year 4.

The interview with Emma at the mid-year stage of the TRP revealed that although Emma had started the program with a strong constructivist disposition, she found it difficult to enact in practice. She was limited by her capacity to put her beliefs into practice and her approach was in conflict with the actual practices adopted in the school. Thus Emma experienced a disorienting dilemma as her pedagogical beliefs about being a constructivist teacher were in conflict with her capability and the context in which she was teaching.

Emma developed a strong sense of belonging to both placement school communities. She found the first placement school, to be “*incredibly welcoming*” and “*embracing*”. At this stage Emma also started to see herself as part of the

teaching profession. She explained that sometimes she found that she automatically referred to herself as being part of the teaching profession when she talked with others. Emma attributed her growing sense of belonging to the teaching profession to the constant immersion in a school and being surrounded by teachers.

Emma coped quite well with the heavy workload of university course work and school placement requirements quite well during the first semester. At the end of the first placement, she was pleased with how things had unfolded, saying, *“The guidance that university is giving us, they couldn't do anything more...I don't have an issue”*. Emma's achievements in this regard set her apart from most of her peers who found the demanding workload of the course to be very challenging. Her previous experience with the high level workload associated with her honours year studies appeared to have provided her with good study skills. The other thing that seemed to help Emma to cope were her realistic expectation of that she would have had to work hard.

1st half of school placement 2 – July to September

Moving onto her second placement in a new school, Emma continued to deepen her knowledge as a teacher, yet she experienced numerous challenges which shook her belief in herself considerably. At this juncture, she said, *“I genuinely have questions whether I can do it being in [name of the second placement school]”*.

The new school gave Emma markedly different learning experiences because there were more problematic students and within her own class there were both year one and year two students. Emma struggled initially, especially in adapting to the new school and getting to know the students, but she had also reported making fruitful achievements under difficult circumstances. For example, she learned how to differentiate a lesson to suit the varying needs of the students in the class, and had a better understanding of children. In addition, she had become more confident with following the guidelines of the curriculum to plan for teaching and handling whole class teaching.

However, classroom management persisted as a big concern for Emma due to the problematic nature of the children's behaviours in class and at once stage her confidence became so negatively impacted that she nearly withdrew from the program. Assessment was yet another issue. She felt *“reasonably ok with”* some

aspects, but she found it hard “*creating valid assessment for the students, that assess them all on the same thing, but assess them in different ways because of their different levels*”. Emma made it clear to the researcher that at this stage assessment was probably her biggest challenge because of the diversity of children’s abilities. Furthermore, Emma felt insufficiently supported by her mentor teacher. There was little duty other than teaching (DOT) time available for her to have conversations with her mentor teacher. Even when there was DOT, the mentor teacher was quite occupied with dealing with problematic student behaviours. She also found it difficult to work with the mentor teacher because she had a very different style of planning lesson from hers.

Emma didn’t feel so much a part of the community as in the first placement school despite saying overall the school was welcoming. To cope with the misbehaviours of the children, the staff worked in a very cohesive way in the second placement school, so “*it’s hard to break into*”. However, Emma’s sense of belonging to the teaching profession persisted. At this stage what stood out the most about Emma’s learning was that she realised the present conditions in the classroom meant she had to compromise with some of her goals to implement collaborative learning.

2nd half of school placement 2 – October to November

The second half of school placement two was mainly devoted to the final block practicum, which had further advanced Emma’s knowledge about differentiating students and catering for their individual needs. She believed these experiences had helped her to achieve a much more sophisticated understanding of the continuum of learning and teaching. She realised every child could learn if they were given opportunities and support, and teaching should be differentiated to suit individual needs. She had also come to terms with how to pitch her lessons appropriately by not cramming in too much content knowledge, but attaching more importance on delivery.

The final practicum also enabled her to develop new strategies for encouraging good behaviour and to achieve “*a more balanced view*” of classroom management. During this period, Emma also got to see how art could be integrated

into teaching to enhance students' learning and how a cohesive whole-school approach could benefit teaching and learning in a profound way.

When summing up the final block practicum Emma said, "*The whole practicum block was a positive learning experience, because it allowed me to be a reflective practitioner*". She also acknowledged the five-week block practicum helped in consolidating what she had been learning at the university through putting it into practice. Emma indicated that working as an independent classroom teacher gave her continuity allowed her to be reflective. Whenever she found something not working in class, she was able to talk to her mentor teacher and to try something different the next day.

During this period, Emma made further improvement in lesson planning, whole class teaching and assessment. She indicated she was able to plan for teaching more appropriately following the guidelines of the curriculum, and her confidence level in this "*was eight out of ten*". For handling whole class teaching, Emma was more confident than before, but it would be "*probably a 6.5 out of 10*", as she explained, "*I feel reasonably confident in my ability to work with the whole class, I still need to gain more confidence in differentiating.*" She also became aware that students' reactions to her teaching were related to the characteristics of the class and the conditions of a particular session. She said, "*The reason it is 6.5 is that I am just realistic that it's hard work, there is work involved in it, I suppose because I am also thinking, my first job is going to be relief teaching. That is going to be the big thing, and just having an understanding of all the different things.*" As for assessment, Emma certainly felt more confident than she was at the beginning of the year, and more confident using a variety of different assessment tools. She said, "*I have a better knowledge base of what is required in assessment, but I am not that confident, and I think until I get my own class, and I have to actually start collating information for portfolios and reports, that isn't going to develop, because it is a matter of collecting the right information, and I suppose using the right assessment tool for the right year group*".

Completing the TRP-December

On completing the course, Emma felt ready to take responsibility for her class as a regular teacher. She was positive from a professional point of view

because she knew as provisionally registered teacher “*There is still a degree of learning and support that happens in the first couple of years*”. Focusing on the school students’, she was also positive, saying, “*I have sufficient knowledge to be able to not damage them*”. What she meant here was that she believed she had sufficient knowledge, for example in classroom management, pedagogy and content knowledge to be able to function as a teacher. As for catering for parents, she felt quite confident being able to form a relationship with them, but she was also aware that the parents were an unknown entity because each parent may have different expectations of her as a teacher.

The impression Emma left on the researcher about her readiness to teach was predominantly positive, whereas Emma felt that she needed to do more work on some areas. It seemed that the more advanced Emma’s understanding of certain matters of teaching, the more she learned about the practice of teaching, the more realistic she became. She said, “*the more I learn, the more I don’t know*”. The researcher believed this was an indication of Emma’s deep learning.

5.4.1.2 Categorisation of Emma’s learning experiences

It is evident from Emma’s year-long account that the TRP had enabled her to grow from a novice in teaching to being a career-ready professional. Emma’s experience during the TRP had reflected a dynamic and multidimensional process of learning to teach across all the domains of learning required of professional teachers. She had developed deep knowledge about students and the curriculum, and made substantial improvements in her teaching practice and being engaged as a professional in the teaching community. What follows is an in-depth analysis of Emma’s learning incidents to determine whether they were informative or transformative, with reference to the stages of Mezirow’s theory. To conclude the case, the researcher will summarise Emma’s major learning incidents in light of the transformative learning process.

Informative learning experiences

What follows is a description of learning incidents derived from Emma’s year-long story, chosen for their significance in reflecting changes of view relating in certain aspects of teaching. They are categorised as informative learning experiences

because these learning episodes involved elaboration of her frame of reference or a new frame of reference.

1. *“You wear multiple hats throughout the day.”*

At the beginning of the year, Emma’s perception of the role of a teacher was centred on teaching strategies in the classroom rather than other integral aspects a teacher’s job. In the interview she talked about three different roles that a teacher has. One was her wish to find out the interests of the students in the class and to incorporate these into her lessons plan, or if unable to do to include student interest in extracurricular activities. She believed this would help students to feel a sense of belonging to the school and that this would enhance their learning. The second was being aware of different learning styles and teaching with creativity. The third was being aware of current affairs and the benefits of incorporating them into teaching. On completion of her first placement, Emma realised that there was so much more to the role of a teacher. She said, *“You wear multiple hats throughout the day. You’re not just the teacher, you’re the social worker, the nurse, the friend...”*. The researcher assumes these newly-developed understandings were predominately the result of Emma’s experiences in the school. Emma didn’t comment on how her perspectives had changed from her earlier perceptions, nor did she mention engaging in rational discourse. For these reasons, the researcher proposed that, Emma’s learning of the new role of a teacher was informative learning, adding new ideas to her existing frame of reference.

2. *“Curriculum is a boat.”*

Another learning experience categorised as informative for Emma involved her new understanding about the relevance of school events in the Catholic system. She raised the issue in interview 2 when she was talking about the impact of her experience during the TRP. Emma thought a lot was happening in the school – perhaps too much – and the extent of how much time, but the extent of how much time for learning and teaching was taken up by religious and other extracurricular events was beyond her expectation. She said, *“When I came into it, I knew it was a very multifaceted job, I think what has surprised me most is just how much it tries to cram into the day, and what gets tossed out.”* To convey this concern, Emma invoked a metaphor *“The curriculum is a boat: the more things are being chucked*

into the boat, something has to come out, otherwise the boat is going to sink. And the things that are getting chucked out are the things that I think are important like literacy". The researcher did not classify Emma's observation as transformative, because her prior frame of reference had shaped her expectation about the breadth of activities in school, *"I knew they were there, but not to the full extent of how much impact it had on what you are supposed to be teaching"*. Thus Emma's realisation of the effect of religious events on learning activities was not a transformation of frame of reference but an expansion of the range or intensity of the structure of assumptions or an elaboration of an existing frame of reference.

3. *"I am a complete witch sometimes."*

The third informative learning experience reported by Emma was how she thought about herself as a teacher. In the first interview Emma said, *"I see myself being a kind teacher, approachable and fair"*. But by the end of her first school placement experience, she perceived herself to be a much stricter teacher than she thought she would be initially, stating, *"I think I am a complete witch sometimes. When I started this I thought I can be a teacher who is, not soft, but kind and calm, but you have to be firm"*. At this time Emma also reported the first full-time four-week block practicum had advanced her understanding of student behaviour. During the practicum she learned to be more flexible and adaptable in responding to student behaviours, saying *"I was able to see how their behaviours fluctuate throughout the week, and how I have to change my behaviours to match theirs or to get on top of their behaviours"*. In this case Emma's frame of reference did not change fundamentally; again it was extended. Her prevailing perspective about being a kind teacher was not negated but strengthened. Her new experiences had resolved inconsistencies within her older belief system. Emma's experiences in this respect therefore evidenced significant learning of a new frame of reference.

4. *"...positive power of art..."*

When talking about positive learning experiences in interview 4, Emma mentioned being involved in the school art exhibition and musical, in which she had the opportunities to see an art specialist teacher in action. Emma said, *"Seeing how engaged the students got with the artistic sides of things, and how proud the children were in being able to do things, and seeing they were showing their parents art*

works” was “*the biggest eye opener*”. Although she had read about the benefits of art in teaching, she hadn’t actually seen it until that point, and her previous idea of how it could be done was rather vague. To Emma these fresh experiences were enlightening and also professionally empowering. She commented, “*Up until then, I’ve only ever seen art as a teacher getting one of the art books. This is what we are going to do. You cut this shape, and you stick that shape here. No, no, no you have to use the colour I’ve given you, not free expression type of stuff*”. She realised when art was taught in a way that allowed free expression, students with poor oral and motor skills could be brought to the same level as the average students. A confined and prescribed way of teaching students art was what she had experienced before. This is not considered a transformative learning experience for Emma, because there was no evidence of her reflection upon prior assumptions about art and participation in rational discourse to achieve consensus of understanding. Instead, her learning was informative because she had acquired a new frame of reference about the positive impact of art or other subjects in teaching literacy. For example, she elaborated, “*...probably not so much a change or a realisation, but I’ve realised how little emphasis is placed on art...it has made me realise that art is something I do want to do...it could be so easily introduced in so many other areas...you can use painting as a story starter in literacy...there are ways of doing it...that probably has been a big learning thing for me...you can use art, you can use science, you can use history, you can use geography, you can use all these other subjects as your themes, which has to be literacy focused as well. You can tie so much together, which I haven’t seen. It’s been sort of varied in that, but it certainly is something I would like to try*”.

5. “*They really do want to learn.*”

As mentioned above, there was evidence Emma had developed deep knowledge about students. In interview 3 when talking about positive learning experiences, she said “*I think I probably came more to realise kids want to do the right thing by you. Most children want to please you, at [name of school] It was a bit clearer that [some of] these kids come from the most horrible backgrounds, yet they really do want to learn and to do the what is right, the vast majority of them*”. Clearly, the experiences of working in the second placement school where there was a diversity of student backgrounds had helped Emma to gain a better understanding of children. As she learned to deal with different learning abilities in the final block

practicum, her perception that every child can learn was reinforced. She said, “*I knew before, all children had the ability to learn, but this last practicum has actually reinforced that, giving me the ability to actually see how giving students the right support that they can learn*”. Reflecting back on what she had done wrong in the first practicum, Emma indicated she felt confident she could deal with a similar situation in the future. She said that in the first placement there were two students whose work should be differentiated. One needed his learning tasks to be reduced in quantity and simplified in content and the other needed his tasks to be extended. At the time she didn’t know how to manage this situation because there was no modelling from the mentor teacher, whereas now she felt she could handle it much better.

Realising the fundamental desire of all students to learn, regardless of their backgrounds, and understanding that students were able to learn when given opportunities and support as long as the learning environment is differentiated to suit them was not a transformative learning experience for Emma. Emma already knew that children could learn; she just added confirming experiences to her meaning perspectives. So her experiences were considered as learning through elaborating an existing frame of reference.

6. “...cohesive whole school approach...”

The last informative learning experience drawn from the data was Emma finding the benefits of a cohesive school community while dealing with behaviour management issues and special education needs. She described the cohesive whole-school approach she had seen, not just in curriculum and but also in behaviour management, really made a difference in the second placement school. What she observed there was that all the staff worked as a cohesive team led by the principal. Academic planning was done as a whole-school approach and an administrative staff support structure was in place to help the classroom teacher deal with behaviour problems if necessary. These experiences had made Emma realise the importance of having a cohesive staff and having a principal with strong leadership skills. This was a new frame of reference Emma had acquired, which is informative instead of transformative because it didn’t involve a critical examination of prior perspectives.

Transformative learning experiences

The following four learning incidents are proposed as transformative elements of learning during Emma's year-long experience during the TRP.

1. *"I feel like I am bribing them."*

In one negative critical incident documented in interview 2, Emma described a conflicting classroom practice, which ran counter to her personal beliefs and advice from university. As her experiences reflected the majority of aspects of the transformative learning process Mezirow (1991) delineates through his theory, they are considered a significant transformation of point of views.

From the university Emma had learned to reward positive student behaviour with intrinsic rewards so that the students appreciated the value of doing the right thing, but in reality she experienced the opposite. She said, *"[I] get to the real world finding those children just won't do that, they have to have an extrinsic reward...my mentor teacher for term two has brought in a money system...I struggled with it because it doesn't sit comfortably with me, to me it feels like bribery..."* [Emma experienced stage 1 disorienting dilemma: self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame]. Realising that there was a clash between reality and her personal beliefs and values, and that what she had learned in university did not translate to practice was a disorienting dilemma to Emma, which also triggered her to critically assess assumptions. She said, *"Even if uni [university] had said to me 'The money system is brilliant, use it, and the kids love it.' It still wouldn't have sat with me...even though they provide loads of evidence, I still wouldn't feel comfortable using it, as it still resonates as bribery to me"*. In addition to reflections on experiences, Emma was also critically reflective of her own assumptions. She indicated as much as she would love to use intrinsic rewards, if the conditions for implementing intrinsic rewards were not present then she would have to come up with something else [Emma experienced stage 2 Critical Reflection: critical assessment of assumptions]. Eventually she started to think about other options, she said, *"[I] try to find an extrinsic reward system that sits with me"*. She also sought professional help, *"I've spoken with Jan the site coordinator, and we've come up with another system so I have my own system outside of that. I now give them a raffle ticket. If they behave well, at the end of the day I draw out of the box, then they can just pick a pencil,*

rubber or something. It is still an extrinsic reward but it doesn't feel quite so much like bribery as the money system does" [Emma experienced stage 3 Rational Discourse: Planning course of action, acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plan, trying out new roles and relationships]. It is evident that Emma had gone through phases of critical reflection and rational discourse with other professionals, which are central to transformative learning. Subsequently, Emma mentioned integrating a new system of reward into her teaching and said, *"It took me two terms to get my head around this whole rewarding thing"* [Emma experienced stage 4 Action: New perspectives, Reintegration]. Though professionally confusing and potentially disabling at the start, Emma's point of view was successfully transformed.

The process of Emma experiencing struggles and confusions in relation to the reward system and later on managing to find an appropriate reward system that matched her individual philosophy suited the actual needs of teaching resonate a la Mezirow (1996), who believed that transformative learning was *"the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experiences in order to guide future action"* (p.162). Emma's learning was transformative insofar as she understood the meaning of her experiences and thought for herself rather than acting upon the belief and judgment of others. Through critical reflection and rational discourse to validate her new understanding, she arrived at a more inclusive and discriminating set of meaning schemes.

2. *"...pitching it too high..."*

Learning to cater for different student needs was another transformative learning experience for Emma. As a novice, Emma was very conscious about student learning and her eyes were fixed on the curriculum. During the first placement Emma taught lessons in which where she felt she was not getting across to the students, which triggered her to think about what went wrong. To critically assess her own ideas and actions, she said, *"I was asking them to do stuff that was beyond them [their abilities] and speaking to them using words that they don't really understand...I was probably putting too much in the lesson initially and pitching it too high for them"* [Emma experienced stage 1 disorienting dilemma: self-examination with feelings of fear, examine one's own practice]. She then made an

effort to rectify her mistakes, saying, “*So now I don’t put as much in the lesson. I don’t worry if I don’t get them all finished, because they all get finished the next day. I’ve lowered the level I was pitching at*” [Emma experienced stage 2 Critical Reflection: exploration of options for new roles, relationships and actions]. This suggests Emma at this stage had started thinking about adapting teaching to the actual needs of the class. Moving on to the second placement, Emma further deepened her understandings about meeting students’ learning needs through working with a new class where there was a split of year-one and year-two students and a wide range of learning abilities. Although it was necessary to pitch the lesson to the appropriate level for the year group, she realised it was equally important to differentiate the lesson to cater for the individual needs of students. In the last five-week block practicum, Emma seemed to have elevated her understanding to a higher level. She said, “*I have learned a lot more about differentiating for different students. It wasn’t really until I was fulltime that I was getting into the swing...I really got to understand what they [the students] could or could not do and how to differentiate*”. At this stage Emma was experiencing a shift of perspective. She said, “*I kind of have it in my head, if I was differentiating something, I had to almost have a different lesson plan for each of them. Whereas, my mentor teacher helped me to realise that it could sometimes be you expect everybody else to write the numbers, but for that child you have to have a sticker with a number on it. He can recognise them but he can’t write them. It is the same lesson plan, but it is how you deliver, not what you deliver. I think got a bit more understanding of that in that final practicum*”. To seek justifications for her prior assumptions, it is apparent from these comments Emma did resort to discussion with her mentor teacher. Through rational discourses, Emma challenged her established and habitual patterns of expectation, resolved distortions, and reached a consensual judgment [Emma experienced stage 2 Rational Discourse: Planning course of action, acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plan, trying out new roles and relationships, building competence in new roles and relationships, and stage 4 Action: New perspectives, empowerment and integration].

Emma’s understandings about the need to cater for students and how to achieve that, evolved as she progressed during the TRP, suggesting a transformative learning experience. She went through some disorienting experiences of not being

able to get her teaching across to students, and struggling with a large range of learning abilities in the classroom. She became critically reflective of her perspectives and assumptions, and developed a greater awareness of pitching lessons at the appropriate learning levels and catering for the individual needs of all children in the class. She was also able to explore how to do that by having conversations with her mentor teacher and finding out plausible and workable solutions. Along the way, Emma's frame of reference about what to teach and how to cater for diversity was contested and ultimately transformed because she said, *"What has changed is what I thought I was able to do in the classroom, more curriculum based stuff...[I] have to be very mindful about not to put too much into lessons. When I started off, I was more concerned about teaching than them actually learning something, so I kind of crammed a lot into it. But I now know, if I want them to learn, to put less in and reinforce a lot. So I suppose the thing that has changed is, I now have a much better understanding of what you have to teach, the content knowledge"*.

3. *"I no longer make his ears bleed"*

It was a big learning curve for Emma to learn to understand fully the importance of classroom management in teaching and how her confidence was affected when dealing with problematic student behaviours. At the commencement of the TRP, classroom management was one of Emma's biggest concerns. She said, *"It is just daunting to think that there are 30 plus children in the classroom, and you got to be constantly putting out bush fires"*. She was reasonably realistic that classroom management was very important and she expected that it would be a struggle for her. Nonetheless in her first school placement, Emma's perspective shifted, she said, *"I knew that behaviour and classroom management was a big thing, but I didn't realise just how big it was. My appreciation of getting that sorted changed since I started"*. Emma recalled that on a Wednesday of her second week of the four-week block practicum, she had *"the worst time"* in the classroom because she felt that she was *"screeching over the top of"* the students and she wasn't controlling them as well as she should do [Emma experienced stage 1 disorienting dilemma: self-examination with feeling of guilt, question one's own practice]. This was a critical event that triggered Emma to assess her own approach in managing the class, and she went to the other professionals around her for help. She said, *"The mentor teacher, site coordinator and the supervisor had been really helpful with tips,*

in that last week it just improved tenfold". Successfully finishing her first school placement, Emma felt that she had gotten past her initial fears about classroom management. However, when Emma started her second placement her confidence level plunged substantially. She said, *"I felt quite confident then. When I come down to [name of second school placement], then I had everything shot to pieces"* [Emma experienced stage 1 disorienting dilemma again: self-examination with feeling of shock]. It seemed that Emma was experiencing another disorienting dilemma that prompted her to reevaluate what she had learned in the previous placement and critically assess her old assumptions underlying her interpretations about student behaviours as new evidence presented itself. Her critical reflections rendered her greater awareness of the institutional context of learning experiences. She said, *"I went from the first class where 28 students, whom most were wilfully obedient, to the second class where 20 students actually had special education needs, and individual behaviour management plans and all that sort of stuff. So [I] went from feeling, 'yeah, I can manage this' to 'Oh god, I don't even know where to start'"* [Emma experienced stage 2 critical reflection: critical assessment of assumptions]. She admitted the challenges of managing the second class affected her confidence massively and she came very close to pulling out of the program. It was quite a challenge for Emma to go from a classroom with only a few behaviour issues and a very supportive environment to the second where *"behaviour is a big thing"* and *"being on her own almost"* as the site coordinator was often occupied with behaviour issues. Emma said, *"Everything I learnt from [name of the first placement school] doesn't work for this particular group of kids. I can't implement new stuff; I have to go by what's been put in place...these kids down at [name the second placement school], even if you go through the traffic lights system, and send them off to the buddy classroom, it makes no difference at all...it is really hard...there is a handful of students, it doesn't matter what you are doing, nothing seems to make any difference. It is frustrating and it is hard not to go home at the end of the day and only think about those five kids who have been giving you grief all day. You tend to forget about the 15 who have actually been great"*.

Although behaviour management issues in the classroom continued to challenge Emma as she progressed further into the final block practicum, she remained critically reflective of her experiences. She stated, *"...because of the fact*

that my class was unusual...that it wasn't a special education class but it did have a lot of special education needs. It was positive because it gave me that experience but also negative because it meant, I was focusing so much more on behaviour rather than teaching". Emma also recognised this frustrating feeling was shared by other teachers, she said *"I actually spoke to a couple of the teachers, not my mentor teacher, there are other teachers, you know they say the same things, sometimes they went home and they would say what have I actually taught today, it's been all about behaviour"* [Emma experienced stage 2 Critical Reflection: critically aware of one's assumptions, recognise one's discontent, and the process are shared by others]. It appeared Emma went through phases of exploring new options, and planning for a course of action, acquiring knowledge for the plan. She realised *"...the key to discipline in the class is to get to know the children"* and she wanted to achieve this. However, she felt *"it was very difficult for me to get to know these children"*. She explained it was partly because there was not enough time for her to bond with the children because some of the university professional development workshops happened to fall on the two distributed days, so she was absent from her placement school. She said, *"I was still struggling to build up relationships with the children in the five-week block practicum"*. She explained the other reason was there were a lot of children who found it difficult to bond with new people. Nevertheless, challenging as it was, half way through the five-week block practicum Emma did start to get connected with most of the children, and she also felt more confident with what she was doing, saying, *"At least by the end of it, I no longer make his ears bleed, because he wasn't stuffing tissues paper in his ear when I spoke, which is good"*.

Completing the course, Emma no longer felt intimidated by classroom management, and she had much more faith in her knowledge and ability in this regard [Emma experienced stage 3 Rational Discourse: Planning course of action, acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plan, trying out new roles and relationships, building competence in new roles and relationships].

When commenting on the biggest change she saw in herself, Emma said, *"Another big one would be my confidence to manage the classroom"*. She was confident with her ability to understand better how to deal with student behaviour problems, and she had accumulated some good strategies for that, she said, *"I do feel*

that I have a little tool-kit of different strategies that I can pull out and try, but the tool-kit isn't just...I haven't just walked along the supermarket shelves and gone, 'yeah, that looks good'...I want to have that in my bag because it provides students with choice. It is positive reinforcement...that is why it was in my tool bag and along with that I have several other things. For those occasions, when you pull one out and it doesn't work. That's not the only thing you've got. You are not suddenly going, 'Now what do I do, that does not work. I am stuck'. I've now got several others, which I didn't have at the beginning of the year".

To Emma, the tool-kit wasn't just a random accumulation of tools, but a selected array of strategies that she developed along the way based on her meaning perspective about classroom management. The decisions to have these strategies and the decisions about what and when to use them were informed and evidence-based. She said, *"It is just not a matter of randomly selecting one and hoping it will work"*. She indicated she was confident that she would react appropriately even if it were a wrong choice, saying, *"I now feel more confident that if one thing doesn't work, I've got something else that I can try, but it still matches my philosophy and my style of teaching"* [Emma experienced stage 4 Action: New perspectives, empowerment and autonomy].

It is evident that Emma's learning about classroom management was a transformative experience, because she went through the majority of the phases delineated by Mezirow that are important for transformation to occur. Emma's point of view about student behaviours, particularly the way she saw herself in classroom management, was transformed as a result of a series of dilemmas and reflections.

4. "Explicit teaching is chalk and talk."

In interview 2, when talking about struggling with ideas or values about teaching, Emma mentioned an issue regarding the delivery of lessons and styles of teaching. It appeared there was a tension between her constructivist pedagogical beliefs and reality of teaching. She said, *"I really wanted to do a lot of group work and I wanted to do collaborative learning...the kind of learning through experience and discovery. Having been in the classroom I now realised while it all sounds very good on paper, it doesn't necessarily always translate to practicality"* [Emma experienced stage 1 Disorienting Dilemma: disorienting dilemma, question one's

own beliefs]. She felt disappointed about not being able to teach in way that the children could learn through exploration and collaboration. The experience contradicted her own previously accepted presupposition, and it was a “disorienting dilemma” for Emma that began the process of transformation of pedagogical belief.

Instead of being discouraged from using group work and collaborative learning, Emma began to critically reflect upon why her presuppositions had come to constrain the way she perceived teaching. She realised she would not be able to implement collaborative learning if the students didn’t have the social skills for it. Emma positively faced her feeling and started to explore new options for validating her pedagogical beliefs. She said, *“That is probably a bit of a disappointment to me in that I couldn’t do as much as I wanted. But then I also know that if I had my own class, and I had them for a whole year, then I would need to start from day one teaching them those cooperative skills, then do the collaborative learning. So it is not completely...I haven’t kind of gone, ‘Oh God, that didn’t work. I am never gonna do it again’. But I’ve gone ‘Oh, that didn’t work, and it didn’t work because they don’t have the skills. So I won’t try it again.’ You need to go a step back and teach them the skills”* [Emma experienced stage 2 Critical Reflection: Critically assess one’s own assumptions, explore options for new roles, relationships and actions].

Other than having critical reflection, Emma was also engaged in conversation with other professionals. She said, “Most of the time, I have been able to work through them...and rationally think about them, but the main thing I did was to talk to someone.” She stated further, “When I wasn’t sure of how to put the lesson together, I spoke with my mentor teacher, asked her advice on how to do the lesson. And then we talked about it afterwards.” Emma explained it was not easy for her to do that initially, “...coz [because] I am not used to telling people if I am feeling a bit stressed or anything. So I had to sort of learn how to do that, massive learning experiences actually” [Emma experienced stage 3 Rational Discourse: Planning course of action, acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plan, trying out new roles and relationships].

By the end of the first school placement, Emma had undergone a shift in point of view that students’ social skills were prerequisites for implementing collaborative learning. Moving onto the second placement, while Emma still felt quite strongly about implementing constructivism, she had gained greater insights as

a result of teaching science. She realised that it required a long and consistent process to establish collaborative learning, saying, *“You can’t go into a unit blind and do collaborative work. Collaborative practice has to start from day one of the term, and it has to infiltrate everything you are doing”*. Emma underwent yet another significant change of point of view regarding her constructivist pedagogical beliefs, showing a shift away from seeing the benefits of doing collaborative teaching per se to having the awareness of the time factor involved in the implementation of collaborative teaching in addition to student social skills. This is evidenced further by her comment, she said, *“It is fantastic you’ve got a class for a whole year, you can start them off in term one doing community circles, and little things like that and get them thinking about the skills they need, and maybe in term two actually do some of it [collaborative learning]”*. Emma also explained, *“If I was doing relief work, I wouldn’t attempt it, wouldn’t go anywhere near it”* [Emma experienced stage 4 Action: New perspectives, reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective]. Being more realistic about balancing her own pedagogical preference with the actuality of her teaching is an indication of Emma’s transformed point of view.

Emma suggested that it was predominantly through personal reflection that she was able to reformulate her assumptions about collaborative learning, and such a shift would inform her future teaching. She said *“In the short term...if I do want to do something that involves some work in groups, then I am gonna have to spend time beforehand teaching them the skills first. In the long term...if I am doing relief work, it is not the sort of thing you do unless you’ve got your own class”* [Emma experienced stage 4 Action: New perspectives, reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective]. This clearly indicates Emma was committed to acting upon her new perspectives.

The change of perception about explicit teaching provided further evidence for Emma’s transformative learning of pedagogical beliefs. By the time she finished her final block practicum, Emma had experienced a complete change of frame of reference. She realised that it is not so much about what to teach, it is more about how to teach it, saying, *“At the beginning I probably worried a lot about delivering an amazingly exciting lesson. Now I know if you not delivering the lesson in a particular way, they are not gonna learn anything, and so now, I know that I need to*

focus on explicit teaching". This was a significant transformation of Emma's habit of mind about her pedagogical belief, because in her prior assumptions she believed that explicit teaching resonated an instructivist approach to teaching, the opposite of the constructivist collaborative teaching she envisioned.

As mentioned previously, Emma came into the course wanting to do constructivist collaborative learning, and this persisted in the first semester. She indicated that speaking to other residents who were doing direct instruction had reinforced her decision, *"Speaking to people like James and Mary and Cathy who are up at [name of school], I think they do spelling mastery up there, which is the direct instruction spelling program. And listening to that and thinking, 'Oh no, that is just so not what I want to be doing'. I do not want to stand in front of the class with a script as the kids sit there, and have no choice. And just, you know, answer it"*.

The trigger event for this transformation was teaching with a spelling journal, which was a strategy, the education department put forward for teaching spelling. *"After a couple of weeks, it wasn't working...how could I do it better? I looked at First Steps, spoke to my mentor teacher, and tried something different. By the end of the five weeks, I realised that it still wasn't working, that's when I realised I had to simply do explicit teaching of the spelling rules. That is the only way they are going to learn it"* [Emma experienced stage 1 Disorienting Dilemma: Disorienting dilemma, question one's own practice]. This had prompted Emma to examine her approach and critically assess her assumptions about explicit teaching. As she said, *"I think when I started, the word of explicit teaching and direct instruction, to me meant teacher-led and it was teacher-focused instruction with no choice of stuff like that, that was how I envisioned it. Whereas now, I realise that it is not that at all. Just because the words say explicit or direct instruction, and because it is teacher-led, it does not mean it is not student-focused and that there is no element of choice in there"* [Emma experienced stage 2 Critical Reflection: Critically assess one's own assumptions].

Emma then tried to acquire knowledge and skills for planning and implementing explicit instruction into her teaching, and made provisions for trying this new method. She said, *"I try to implement a bit more of the direct instruction and explicit stuff in Maths for instance, just trying to play with what worked and*

what didn't work and that sort of thing. I think it set me off on a search of the Internet to try to find more information so that I became more aware of how I wanted to do things differently. It actually worked very well when I tried it with the kids in maths, and it did help with the behaviour, and so I tried to keep that sort of going in those particular sections". The section Emma was referring to here was some morning routines when she tried doing direct and explicit instruction with the students' learning times on the clock. She said, *"So we put the big clocks on the whiteboard, and got them to come up and change the times. So doing that sort of direct instruction there. This is nine o'clock. What time is it? It is nine o'clock. If we move the clock by half an hour, what do we get? Get them to come up and do that sort of thing. Keeping the pace fast did work for them as well"* [Emma experienced stage 3 Rational Discourse: Planning course of action, acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plan, trying out new roles and relationships].

While trying out explicit instruction, Emma also had to renegotiate her understandings. She said, *"That [doing direct instruction for teaching time on clock] also shows me how I need to, how important it is doing explicit instruction, that you as a practitioner really know your stuff and know where you are going. Maths is a bit of a weakness of mine, it is not my strong point. My mentor teacher was the maths specialist at the school. Watching her teach really makes me realise the vocabulary for questioning, forces me to question in that way...so I now know the importance of that style of teaching, the pedagogy, and I now also then need to get the vocabulary in my head for the subjects to be able to then deliver them. The delivery method is one thing, the content knowledge is the another"*.

When asked how she felt about her new role in explicit teaching, Emma said, *"I felt good and felt positive. It also made me realise I could have done things quite differently before"*. She also indicated in her final practicum it made her more relaxed, because she had more confidence with a range of strategies to try. This suggests Emma had reached the stage of building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships [Emma experienced stage 3 Rational Discourse: Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships].

There was also evidence showing Emma was ready to act upon her new meaning perspective about explicit teaching. Answering whether the shift of understanding would inform her future teaching, Emma said, *"I think so, as I already*

said, it will make me focus more on explicit instruction for literacy and numeracy, 'cos I will continue to do collaborative learning it will make me focus on social skills...when I have my own class..." [Emma experienced stage 4 Action: New perspectives, empowerment, reintegration].

It is evident that Emma's frame of reference about learning pedagogy was completely transformed. She no longer had her eyes fixed only on constructivist collaborative learning. She said, *"I was so pro mixed ability groups, constructivist learning, collaborative practice, and now, while I still like that, that is not the only way I will teach. I will now use different pedagogies. The explicit teaching is something I would not have looked at it at all at the beginning, because I was one of those people who thought explicit teaching is chalk and talk. It is teacher talking at the front. It is teacher-focused, it is not student-focused, and I don't want to do it. Now I know, I am actually completely opposite. It is student-focused by the very nature of the fact that if the students are learning, the focus is on the children and that's the key thing"* [Emma experienced stage 4 Action: New perspectives].

At the of the year, Emma was much more embracing of both pedagogical approaches, evidenced by her comment, "You can have a teaching philosophy that is purely based on explicit learning, you can have a teaching philosophy that is purely based on direction instruction, or constructivism or instructivism, whatever, but you have to know your class and you then have to adapt your philosophy to suit the class....If your pedagogy is constructivist cooperative learning, and you plough on regardless, you are not gonna have a productive time. You are gonna put in a lot of work for nothing and the kids aren't going to enjoy it. You have to know your class, know what they can do, know how much they would tolerate and go from there" [Emma experienced stage 4 Action: New perspectives, empowerment].

Emma gave a vivid description of a visual representation of her rationalised attitudes toward both pedagogies. In the end, she said, *"I suppose if I had to draw it in a curve[graph], with fully explicit instruction it would have been very low, and then it's now gone up toward the end. If I was doing it for the collaborative learning, it would have started very high, and kind of come down, right down as if I was failing miserably with it, and it has gone back up again as I've learnt what strategies need to be implemented. Probably before, at the beginning direct instruction would have down here, cooperative learning would have been up there. Now they are at a*

parallel because I see there is a place for both of them. It is just, it is how you do it and what subjects and things like that”.

Triggered by a serious disorienting dilemma, Emma went through a dynamic process of critically assessing prior assumptions, exploring new roles and options, and planning and acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing her new roles and plans, building competence and self-confidence in her new roles, and eventually integrating this new role in her teaching on the basis of conditions dictated by her new perspective. Only one phase of “the recognition of the process of transformation was shared and others have negotiated a similar range” (Mezirow, 1994, p. 224) was not shown in the data. Nevertheless, this long and evolving process of Emma’s pedagogical belief about collaborative learning versus direction instruction seems to constitute a significant transformative learning process. In the words of (Mezirow, 2000b, p. 8), Emma transformed her “taken-for-granted frames of reference”, i.e. constructivist approach to teaching, to make them “more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true justified to guide action”.

5.4.1.3 Summary of Emma’s learning experience during the TRP

All the aspects identified by Emma that have undergone changes are summarised in Table 5.7 below.

Table 5.7: Summary of Emma's learning experience

Aspect of Teaching	Informative		Transformative	
	Elaborating existing frame of reference	Learning new frame of reference	Transforming points of view	Transforming habits of mind
Awareness of the role of teacher		✓		
Understanding of school events	✓			
Self-perceptions of being a teacher		✓		
Integrating art in teaching		✓		
Students' learning ability	✓			
Recognition of cohesive staff		✓		
Rewarding student behaviours			✓	
Catering for students' needs				✓
Classroom management			✓	
Style of teaching				✓

Overall, Emma's story evidenced a mixture of informative and transformative learning experiences in various aspects of teaching and learning. She had acquired some new frames of reference about the role of a teacher, the self-perceptions of being a teacher, integrating art in teaching, and the importance of having a cohesive staff in the school. Through making meaning of her new experiences during the TRP, Emma's perspective transformation ranged from rewarding good student behaviours, catering for students' learning needs, classroom management, to her teaching philosophy. Her beliefs about pedagogy were fundamentally transformed, and her mindset about teaching changed as well. Emma's perceptions about teaching moved away from herself to the student. The early stage of the TRP was about what she thought she needed to do to be a good teacher. Her preconceived beliefs dominated her practice. In other words, her ideas were more focused on teaching than student learning. However, at the latter stage, the focus shifted away from what she wanted to do, onto what was the best for students. This means student learning was prominent, and her practice was informed by a new set of pedagogical beliefs.

One of the researcher's aims of this study was to determine whether the TRP helped to prepare teachers to draw from their knowledge to make informed decisions in their practice instead of just having a repertoire of tools and strategies. Emma's development supported the aim of the TRP, as evidenced by her comments, *"If teachers want to be viewed as a profession, rather than a job, then it has to be the former [able to make informed decisions]. It has to be you are preparing people to make informed choices, because otherwise you are just creating sheep, who will go out into whatever school they get put in and copy what is already there. As education professionals if we want to improve the education system for further generations, we have to be able to spot what is not working, and have some sort of knowledge to be able to change that. And, you know, the change does not have to be a massive change. It doesn't have to be that the course is preparing people to go on and do a PhD so they are gonna revolutionalise education or something, but it could be something like a very simple change that you know realising just by simply putting in a little song in the morning literacy block, and of getting the kids up and getting them doing a few actions in the little song, it is gonna help them to understand what a verb is, or what an adjective is. And this is going to work better than the previous way of having them sit in the classroom and write out a list of adjectives, you know, well, then that is an informed decision that they've made, that is evidence-based, that is improving practice. And it is those little changes I think that the course is hoping, from my views, hoping to achieve, the little microscopic changes, it is not macroscopic changes"*. Emma demonstrated that the whole learning process seemed to have helped her to be able to make informed decisions in her practice, which is based on her knowledge of teaching. From her story, it is not difficult to notice that this ability was present in her thinking in the latter stage of her TRP and it is very likely that it will permeate her teaching practice in the future.

5.4.2 Jack's story

Jack was the second case study participant, who demonstrated a substantially different learning trajectory during his TRP.

Table 5.8: Profile of Case Study Participants 2

Profile of Jack	
Age at time of participation:	22
Gender:	Male
Marriage Status:	Single
Education background:	Bachelor of Sport Science
Work experiences in relation to teaching:	Year-10 teaching experience 100-hour practicum in sport teaching

Jack was one of the youngest residents in the TRP, with a previous degree in sport science. He didn't have as much work experience as the other mature-aged residents because he came straight to do the TRP after he finished his undergraduate course. Jack considered himself as a good enough student, who got good enough marks, but never really excelled during his school years. Inspired by a teacher in his year six and seven who motivated him to get best of himself, and other role-model teachers in high school, Jack said, *"I want to be a teacher as well. I want to motivate these kids the way these teachers motivated me"*. Jack didn't have any formal classroom teaching experience before coming to the TRP, but he had experiences in interacting with both primary and high school students through teaching sport. He chose to do his year-10 work experience in his old primary school as a physical education teaching assistant for a week. As a partial requirement of a unit during his undergraduate sport science program, Jack did a 100-hour practicum in the field of sport teaching. Jack said he remained interested in pursuing a teaching career through high school to university years.

5.4.2.1 Review of Jack's year-long learning to teach

Entering the TRP- January

Before enrolling in the TRP, Jack went to see an education advisor at the university and found himself in favour of the TRP program because of its ongoing school placement component. He particularly liked the idea of going to the school for two days a week from the first day of the school term, because he believed, *"The basis of being a teacher is to get rapport with the students, and then develop from there"*.

At the commencement of the TRP, Jack seemed to have a fairly vague expectation of what he wanted to get out of the TRP. However, he mentioned wanting to learn to be a constructive and hands-on teacher and being able to put the theoretical knowledge he would learn in the program into a real-life teaching environment. Relating his initial perceptions of his self-image as a teacher to his own teachers at schools, Jack aspired to be a well-liked, approachable and passionate teacher. He said, *“I want the kids to be as passionate as I am for teaching them, as they are to learn from me and what I can teach them”*.

Jack’s main anxiety at this stage was about behaviour management, especially what he thought of as the *“snowball effect”* of bad student behaviours. He said, *“It is how I would be able to stop that in a constructive way, not to yell, not to be perceived as this mean teacher not wanting the students to come back, that’s the one anxiety I do have”*. Other than this, Jack was feeling quite positive about how his learning would unfold because he knew he would have his mentor teacher as his safety net. He said *“I would hope that the mentor teacher is gonna be beside me every step of the way, to help me if things do get out of hand”*.

Jack was most conscious about relationships with students. Through constantly putting himself back into the students’ position, Jack had gained a good understanding of how to make connections with his prospective students. He believed, *“the biggest thing is to build rapport”* and show genuine interests in the students. Yet he was also aware of the downside of the small age difference between himself and the students, particularly in high schools. He believed he would need to keep a professional distance from the students.

Jack, as a fresh graduate with limited classroom teaching experience, admitted he had a greater tendency to tap into his own rather recent experiences as a student before starting the TRP. He shared some of the most distinct characteristics of young residents in the cohort. He was eager to learn, and passionate about what he was doing, yet he projected a rather ‘naïve’ image at this stage in terms of his understanding of what teaching entailed and what he wanted to achieve in the TRP. By contrast, some of the mature-age residents, who already had many years of teaching experiences prior to the TRP, appeared to have deeper understandings in this regard. Take Cathy for example, she wanted to get rid of the *“education*

assistant hat”, and to transit from education support to mainstream classroom specialising in art and at-risk students.

School placement 1 – February to June

By the time Jack finished his first school placement, the most important thing he had learned about teaching was to be explicit with all his instructions and to use his initiative to prepare for lessons as best as he could during DOT time. Also he had developed some concepts for managing students and learned to be able to “*nip bad behaviours in the bud very early on*”.

Part of his positive learning experiences so far was the opportunity to work alongside experienced teachers and seeing the benefits of doing collaborative teaching. Another one was being able to do explicit teaching and understand the relevance of such an instructional strategy.

Although Jack had made some improvements in classroom management, this was the area about when he still felt anxious as he found the consequence system for bad behaviours not working for him in class when dealing with disruptive students. He said, “*Behaviour management is still a work in progress. There have been a couple of times when I really had to raise my voice and that did scare a couple of kids*”.

Jack felt confident in class about being able to teach a specific subject to a group of children, and being able to manage them and get the work done; however, he felt the ability to find resources and what needed to be taught, and relating that to the curriculum was still very much lacking, which he admitted had lowered his overall confidence. His insufficient knowledge in integrating the curriculum with his teaching cast some self-doubts, evidenced by his comment, “*What if I teach my kids something that has absolutely nothing to do with the curriculum, and there is no way of benefiting at all? For them to walk out of my class after a year still at the same point that they are walking in would be the biggest anxiety I have about the curriculum. I need to know a lot more on it*”.

Another area Jack thought he needed to work on was his assessment skills. While he had learned to use a checklist and marks to assess students, it was just “*...a slight improvement but not overly big*”.

In terms of Jack's sense of professional identity as a teacher, he had a positive sense of belonging to the school community where he was based. As for the teaching profession, he felt that he did belong but he also felt restricted in some way as a student teacher. He was comfortable with voicing his own opinions but not about disagreeing with other teachers.

Up until this point, it appeared that Jack had made some achievements in some aspects of teaching, yet there were still some big gaps in his knowledge in terms of planning lessons in alignment with the requirements of the curriculum, managing disruptive student behaviours and assessing learning outcomes. According to his reflection, Jack's development so far was mainly based on mentor modelling, emulating what the mentor teacher did and how the mentor teacher approached students. Jack was yet to develop his own stance in teaching through critically assessing new experiences.

1st half of school placement 2 – July to September

During this period Jack asserted he had reinforced what he had learned in his previous placement and further developed skills and knowledge in some other aspects of teaching. As Jack was teaching higher levels, at year six and seven, for the second placement, he had learned the importance of using more versatile interactive instruction strategies, like fewer worksheets but more smart board or video use to keep the students of the higher year group engaged in the class. He also learned how to structure classes more effectively.

During this period Jack had one particular encounter with extreme behaviour problems, when he witnessed a student smacking his mentor teacher's broken finger on purpose and running off afterwards. Confronted with this extreme student behaviour, Jack was rather shocked and found it difficult to take in. He was disappointed because he felt that the student just didn't care and Jack felt a sense of despair. He said, *"As a teacher, it is not much more you can do, coz it is so personal, and so close to home."* This incident made Jack realise there would be certain circumstances when all the behaviour management strategies wouldn't work, and things get out of control. This experience had impacted on Jack negatively because he felt he might have theoretical understanding of classroom management, but in terms of implementation he appeared to be under prepared and overwhelmed.

It was evident that by the end of first placement, Jack had developed some confidence in teaching practice, but not so much in lesson planning, especially in linking to the curriculum. Neither did he feel adequate in assessing students' learning outcomes. Yet by the time Jack got through the first half of the second placement, he had gained confidence in both teaching practice and assessment as he transited from doing mostly group activities in the first placement to complete whole-class teaching. Although starting off "*a bit shaky*", Jack was feeling comfortable about teaching the class while still actively monitoring the whole classroom environment. As for assessment, Jack had extended to using other assessment tools and deepening his understanding. He found it quite easy to use checklist and anecdotal evidence, and he was able trace the outcomes back to the curriculum, and use this information for reporting. At this stage Jack had not done any formative assessment, yet he was confident he knew the theory and how to implement it, and he was hoping the final block practicum would allow him to try it out.

However, lesson planning, especially forward planning, continued to be an area of concern for Jack, but he felt he was a little bit more confident now than he was at the start and at the end of the first placement. The biggest issue for Jack was to find out what the students needed to be taught according to the curriculum. He said, "*If I was to teach fulltime next year...I'd be terrified...thinking that you have to come up with 40 weeks of planning, at five days a week, in six different learning areas, and you have the report and everything, it is a lot of work involved obviously*".

Apart from the lesson planning, Jack had come quite a long way developing his confidence as a teacher. The class Jack had in the first half of the second placement was "*one of the worst I could possibly get*". At that stage he was anxious about the planning part of the final block practicum that was yet to come, but was quite optimistic that if he was to get through teaching a class like that, it would boost his confidence for further teaching. He said, "*Knowing that I have that experience, I will be a lot more confident in being able to teach what I've got. If I had found out that this is what I am going to teach, this is how it links...and having those documents there ready for me, I will be very confident teaching next year, no worries*".

Unlike his last placement school, Jack didn't have the same sense of belonging to the teaching community, he said, "*I just didn't feel connected to people in my block*". Not having that sense of belonging to the school community affected Jack's feeling of connection to the teaching profession as well.

2nd half of school placement 2 – October to November

For some of the residents the final block practicum was an affirming experiences in that they were able to see all that they had learned in the course coming together in their daily teaching. However, Jack was yet to see himself having that package because he was further challenged by classroom management and lesson planning during this period, which impacted on his overall confidence in teaching. He said, "*It just made me realise make me realise how unprepared I would be taking a class*".

Jack had some problems planning for maths in particular during this period. It was a rather negative experience for him because it was very stressful for two reasons. Firstly, forward planning had been a weak link prior to his final block practicum. Secondly, in the first half of his second placement, Jack had not taught or observed any maths lessons because during the maths lesson time he was attending reflection section with the on-site university liaison. Thus Jack didn't have enough knowledge of the students' academic levels in maths, and he relied on the syllabus to plan for his year six students. After he had the first maths lesson, he found out that what he had planned for the final block practicum in maths was not suitable for the students because their math ability was up to year three instead of year six where they should be. Jack was then caught up in a very difficult situation. He said, "*I had to redo in one lump the final three weeks worth of forward planning documents and submit them in a couple of hours over the weekend...I was told on the Friday and they had to be in by Saturday morning. That was extremely difficult to try and work under that kind of pressure to come up with new things...*". Although it was a big struggle for him, Jack eventually got through and benefited from it. He indicated that he had learned to be a lot more organised in terms of having all the documents and resources for teaching well in advance. Identifying learning objectives was another aspect that had improved and he realised having clear learning objectives and outcomes was crucial for assessment and reporting. He said, "*The learning objectives really need to be so much more focused. They can't be too broad because*

when you're reporting on students, and you look back on your notes and go 'what is that...?' so if you have really focused aspects of your learning objectives or outcomes, and you have the feedback and assessment there to back you up, it makes reporting a hundred per cent easier".

Jack said he initially had some issues dealing with severe student behavioural problems during this final practicum. He described this as a matter of not being able to come down to the level of the students who were having anger outbursts because he didn't have an established relationship with them. As the final block practicum progressed, Jack indicated his classroom management skills improved, particularly in defusing extreme behavioural situations, and the experience had really reinforced his understanding of the importance of having a bond with his students. He said, *"I know the importance of getting to know the kids, getting to know their background, what they like, what can easily shut off a bad situation... calm them down... I know what it is you have to do with those kind of things now"*. Jack had also learned that there was a big difference between *"stern talking"* and *"yelling"*, he said, *"The students don't respond well to being yelled at"*. In spite of the improvements he had, Jack's confidence with classroom management went down at the end of the program. He said, *"It is still lacking and I am still developing. It takes a long time to find out what works and what doesn't. You have to take bits and pieces of everything... it is just about finding something that suits you, and you have to use things with different groups of students as well"*.

Having the experience in his second placement school of teaching unmotivated students from a low socioeconomic area and deal with a lot of extreme behaviours, Jack indicated he was a lot better in handling whole-class teaching, but he felt the ability to teach effectively while keeping the entire class in control for the whole lesson was still lacking. He said, *"My instructional skills are not very good ...if I get nervous or if I forgot where I am going, I tend to freeze or I end up speaking a little bit too quickly...I still think I need a lot of more work for whole class...I am still putting out spot fires..."*.

Jack had also made some progress in assessing students' learning in that he was able to incorporate assessment in every lesson he did using different tools. He said, *"Assessment has got a lot better than when I was in [name of first placement*

school]. Compared to what to what I was doing in this prac, in [name of first placement school] I did zero assessment”.

Completing the TRP-December

On completion of the TRP, Jack felt he was not ready to be a full-time teacher, saying, *“At this point, if I was to get offered a job or asked would I apply for a job right now, the answer would be no”*. Despite his uncertainty in his ability, Jack finished the course meeting all the requirements. His young age seemed to be a major factor influencing his confidence. Firstly, he found it difficult to establish himself as an “authority” figure because the students tended to see him as a “brother figure”. This was one of the big barriers for him in managing the classroom, especially when disciplining the students with behavioural problems. Secondly, he felt that he lacked life experiences to help him cope well with the enormous stress and intensiveness of the course. He said, *“I don’t think I am emotionally...and my maturity levels are ready to be a teacher just yet...the course...there are a fair few things you do skip, it is really pretty much just thrown down your throat, it is pretty forced on you. That was pretty difficult. If it could be spaced out over two years, it would be a lot better”*. It is apparent that as a young recent graduate resident, Jack didn’t respond well to the intensiveness of the course. However as he realised the benefits of the residency mode of learning to teach and adding more life experiences after the course, he said, *“In saying that, if I wasn’t in a residency program, and I went straight away into that five week prac...It would have been 100 times worse...Everything I have been taught in this residency is still quite fresh in my mind, and it is a matter of maturing enough with that knowledge and gaining more life experiences to put the whole package together”*. Thirdly, Jack felt that at that stage of his life, he was not resilient enough to cope with some of the setbacks he had during the TRP. He said, *“I struggled with resilience. Things did get to me. I wasn’t very good at brushing off things that had happened, they stuck with me...Things were said that I took to heart, I still was thinking about. As the prac [second placement] went on, I learned how to just brush off those comments, because the kids don’t really mean it. They were just angry because they were not gonna get their way, and you hadn’t establish your authority. This prac has definitely made me more resilient”*.

On leaving the TRP, Jack remained determined to pursue a teaching profession and to continue to learn to be a more qualified teacher. He said, *“I just need to go out and have some more life experiences...I want to do some relief work...just to keep building on life experiences until a point when I feel ready to take on a class...it [relief teaching] gives that opportunity to teach but also to be able to experiment with new things”*.

5.4.2.2 Categorisation of Jack’s learning experiences

Jack’s year-long overview demonstrates that he had developed from being an overly naïve novice teaching candidate to a professionally informed pre-service teacher. On completion Jack did not have full confidence in taking on the role of a full-time teacher, but he had a good mastery of the knowledge and skills and a transformed mindset for teaching, and the intention to build on his TRP experience during the TRP and become a better teacher. In what follows some of Jack’s learning experiences are discussed against Mezirow’s transformative learning tenets.

Informative learning

1. *“There are different levels of passion towards teaching.”*

One of the informative learning experiences emerging from the data was Jack’s self-perception of being a passionate teacher. Inspired by teachers he had had in his own schooling, Jack was very enthusiastic about teaching, and he wanted to motivate his students to get the best of themselves. Finishing his school placement, Jack seemed to have a deeper understanding of being passionate. He said, *“Now that I look back at it, I would love to be a passionate teacher, but there are different degrees of passion towards teaching. There is a passion of ‘I want to be able to teach everyone in this class to be at the same level and to be a hundred per cent super students’. There is also the passion of ‘getting here a little bit earlier and doing one-on-one maths with the kid, or staying up at school making sure’ ...so there are different levels of passion”*. It seemed Jack had extended his concept about passion. While the ultimate passion of improving students’ education was still in his mind, he also became aware that passion is also reflected in a deep commitment to making small steps to help students learn on a daily basis. Jack’s realisation in this regard is categorised as informative because he learned through elaborating on his existing frame of reference.

2. *“Students have a lot more going on with them than what meets the eye.”*

In comparison to the students Jack taught in his first placement school, students in his second placement had a lot more behavioural problems, which created opportunities for him to develop more knowledge about students. As he began his second placement, Jack was exposed to an array of domestic issues that were affecting the students. He said, *“Students have a lot more going on with them than what meets the eye... especially when you go to a low socioeconomic area...I had no idea and I didn’t even think before coming to [name of the second placement school] there are kids who haven’t eaten their breakfast going to school, they wouldn’t have slept in their bed...they maybe have slept in the car...their parents are probably in jail and they live with their grandma or relatives...the majority come to school because this is where they feel safest”*. It was a disorienting experience for Jack to be confronted with these issues that didn’t fit in with his old belief system about students. He said, *“It is definitely shocking... I have been very naïve, going through [name of the first placement school] I did know the students could have gone through that”*. Having a new frame of mind about students, Jack developed a stronger awareness of treating the students as different individuals in addition to building rapport with them. For example, in the interview he explained how he had learned to interact with a couple of Aboriginal students by not looking into their eyes but just glancing at them while monitoring the class to avoid setting those students off. This is considered as an informative experience of learning a new frame of reference.

3. *“I have learned how to not be as laid back in the classroom.”*

At the onset of the course, Jack was conscious about having a good relationship with his students and he wanted to be a well-liked teacher. Soon after he started his first school placement, Jack found himself struggling to find a balance between being *“cool and laid back”* and being *“stern”*, especially when he needed to make a transition during the lesson. He said, *“I am trying to find a good balance. At the moment there are too many degrees of separation between the two, there is really no common ground...”*. Jack was aware of the disadvantage of being a fairly young student teacher when he started the TRP, so at this stage he was not overly worried about the dilemma. With a positive attitude he said, *“That is something I have to work on”*.

By the first half this second placement he seemed to have made some substantial breakthroughs. He indicated that although he still made jokes to maintain rapport with his students, he no longer shouted or screamed at them. Instead he relied more on using “*cues to start*” and using more transitions to keep kids on task. He said, “*I have learned how to not be as laid back in the classroom but also not shouting and raising my voice to the kids...not have extremes...but meeting half way in between the two*”. Reflecting on his experiences in the first placement, Jack felt that he was dealing with the students on both ends of the continuum. He said, “*I was definitely extreme as in like I was very nice and very chirpy, and having joke with the kids, but I was also yelling like ‘Guys you have no idea how annoying this is’*”.

At the end of the second placement, Jack was still not fully confident with his ability to maintain a balanced stance as a teacher. He was pleased that he had come a long way but he would need to continue working on this issue. He said, “*I need to find the balance between...I kind of had the problem where I liked to be well-liked by the students, but you need to have boundaries between being someone they like and someone they trust, and having to be an authoritative figure if they stray off the task. I am still trying to find that middle ground of being well-liked but also being authoritative*”.

It was evident that Jack’s perceptions about how he saw himself as a teacher had evolved over the course of the TRP from just focusing on being a “*well-liked*” teacher to seeking a balanced stance in dealing with students. His learning experiences was a continuing process of elaboration on an existing frame of reference, without critically reflecting on the premise of his prior assumption on which his perceptions of being a “*well-liked*” teacher were based.

Transformative Learning

1. “*Kids should be treated by equality but equally.*”

Jack’s knowledge about rewarding student behaviour had gone through a lengthy process of refinement stretching through two placements. His prior assumptions about when and how to reward good behaviours were transformed into a new set of expectations or habit of minds that filtered his interpretation of new experiences.

In interview 2 Jack talked about seeing his mentor teacher giving rewards to badly behaving students, and that triggered him to examine his own ideas about reinforcing good student behaviours. He found his belief was colliding with what was being practised. He said, *“There has been a struggle where I see a student misbehaves, there should be a consequence. But those students who are known to be mischievous during class, they should not have to be bribed by rewards to do the right thing. Because what you are doing is you are rewarding them for acting normally, whereas you should be rewarding the normal kids for acting better. As far as I am concerned, that is the biggest conflict I have”*.

Jack’s assumption then was that teachers should not reward misbehaving students for doing something that an average student always does. Feeling confused and uneasy, Jack turned to his mentor teacher, and was advised it was the easiest way to get that student on task. Seeking different opinions, Jack was also engaged in conversations with a couple of other teachers and received a similar response that if one normally mischievous student did something good then just gave him a reward.

At this point Jack was caught up with this disorienting dilemma. He said, *“I feel a bit annoyed but I could see where that was coming from. We are under so much pressure for these kids to be on task and teaching them in the whole forty weeks. There was pretty much a routine and the timeline of what they should be teaching. They have a set time line for that...I empathised, there must be some ways for doing it differently”* [Jack experienced stage 1 Disorienting Dilemma: Disorienting dilemma, self-examination with feelings of discomfort].

Jack started to look for alternatives by interacting with another teacher in his block who was a behaviour management expert, which opened his eyes. Jack was critical about his prior assumptions. He said, *“Every kid is not the same, to treat them the same would be ridiculous. Good and nice kids doing their work is not really out of the norm for them. It is not overly outstanding achievement wise...you do give them verbal praise...Whereas if a child who might be like ‘nah...I can’t be bothered doing this’ is actually on task...though he may not be as quick as other kids, he should be rewarded...”* [Jack experienced stage 2 Critical Reflection: critically assess one’s own assumptions]. Recognising his old ways of thinking about treating students by one standard was distorted and it no longer held true, he came to the

realisation that students should be treated by equality but not equally and started look for options for this new role.

For literacy, Jack differentiated his students into three different groups: one being well-behaving students who always do their work; the second being students who struggle and the third being those who are always disruptive and not on task. He then responded to the students' performance accordingly. He explained, "*If I see the kid doing that, that's when I go to the checklist and go 'Ok, which group is this kid in? oh, he is actually a struggler, but he is doing the work. He is on task. Regardless of what is going on here, he is doing it. Fantastic, I should praise him and I should reward him'*" [Jack experienced stage 3 Rational Discourse: Planning course of action, trying out new roles and relationships].

Jack tried to act out his new perspective once with a student in his literacy group on one task. In his mind this student was within the group of students who would go '*I can't be bothered, I won't do it*'. By working with this student individually and giving her positive reinforcement when she was on task, he managed to get the student to finish the literacy activity. As a result of this student not being disruptive, he had a good class. This lesson was confirmed his new approach because he got to see the positive outcome, and because he received some good feedback from his mentor teacher. He said, "*Just her being on task, even my mentor says 'I don't know what you did to her or how you did it, but somehow you got her on task, and that is very difficult to do, and you actually did it, so you should be very proud of that'*".

Through this learning incident Jack also developed some self-confidence in his new role, saying, "I felt quite good actually, when this particular thing with the student happened, it made me feel really good, and it reinforced what [name of mentor teacher] told me. Knowing that I might not change the students' outcome 100 per cent, it is just a little thing that I know I can get her to do if I have the correct strategy...that little thing boosted my confidence significantly, which is good" [Jack experienced stage 3 Rational Discourse: Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships].

In commenting on how these experiences affected how he taught, he said, "It is about knowing where the students are at, you have to know that before you take a

class. You have to be always vigilant trying to pick up even the smallest little thing to keep them on task, and to keep them going ‘Oh, wow, I am doing good.’ Especially the kid who normally doesn’t do that, you have to give them little scaffolding to try to get them where you want them to be. In saying that, you always still have to keep going with the kids who normally do it...you have just got to keep the balance...that definitely changed the way I teach” [Jack experienced stage 4 Action: New perspectives, reintegration].

It is evident from the above comment that Jack had consciously reintegrated his new perspective into his teaching. Jack’s frame of reference about rewarding student behaviours was significantly transformed into one that was more inclusive and discriminating, which is evident in Jack’s own comment, *“It is just about giving rewards and giving praise when it is necessary, depending on the child. All the children should not be treated equally, which was a sharp contrast to what I had thought at the start”* [Jack experienced stage 4 Action: New perspectives, empowerment]. This is categorised as a significant transformation of habit of minds or perspective transformation because there was evidence of Jack going through all the phases delineated by Mezirow that are indicative of the occurrence of transformative learning.

2. “Teachers are one hundred per cent super heroes.”

One of Jack’s transformative learning experiences was his understanding of the complexity of teaching. Coming into the program with very limited experience as a classroom teacher, Jack was quite taken back by the demands of being a teacher. By the end of first school placement, Jack’s over-optimism had been replaced by a more realistic sense of the multifaceted nature of teaching. He said in interview 2, *“Teachers are one hundred per cent super heroes, from what they had to put up with...behaviour issues...range of abilities...catering for those individuals, reporting, PDs, you are always constantly learning”*. Realising teaching was not as easy as he thought, Jack found his old way of seeing teaching was no longer adequate to make sense of his new experiences. He pointed out teaching had *“a lot more aspects than I thought”*. He further commented, *“I came in as fairly naïve, just going, ‘Okay, what you do is that you rock up, and teach what you are supposed to teach, and make sure it is to the curriculum, and that is it. You go home at the end of the day at three o’clock’”*. Adding new dimensions to his habit of minds, Jack said,

“The level of commitment you have to put in teaching far exceeded what I believed when I started this course...[teaching is] no way [easy], you gotta get there a least an hour before the day starts. You gotta prepare. You gotta make sure everything is alright, and you gotta have back-up plans...” [Jack experienced stage 1 Disorienting Dilemma: Disorienting dilemma, shock, self-examination with feeling of guilt and shame].

Starting his second placement, Jack went through another shocking stage confronted by the demands of being a teacher in a school with students of low socioeconomic status. The experiences of being exposed to a much more challenging class comprised of students who displayed an array of behavioural issues further opened his eyes, He said, *“I was petrified. I went in and go ‘Oh my god, this is going to be very difficult’I got told [name of second placement school] it was gonna be a bit more difficult, but I never realised how much more difficult”*. Jack was scared at the beginning of the second placement, and by the end of the distributed days he said, *“I wasn’t feeling too bad”*. However, as he progressed to the first two weeks of the final practicum, the situation got worse, as evident in his reflection, *“I was doing very poorly for the first three weeks, I was not really assessing that much. Learning outcomes weren’t there. The work wasn’t there. The behaviour management was off, and the kids weren’t learning anything. They were just doing activities...when I asked the kids what we’ve just learned about...no hands came up...They’ve gone through a lesson without learning anything”*. Being very stressed, he said, *“I was like ‘oh my god’. I was very nervous about completing it and just inching and inching my way forward”*. Jack indicated this sense of failure kept building to a point in week three when he questioned whether he wanted continue the course. Feeling completely overwhelmed, he took a day off to see the course coordinator about this dilemma, reflecting on his expectation of teaching, and exploring solutions to deal with this problem. He also sought help from other teachers in the school. After that, Jack had a change of heart, and he took onboard all of the advice he was given and made efforts to improve his teaching in the following week. He said, *“I just pretty much gave absolutely everything. I made more assessment, made sure my learning objectives were a lot better, trying to be a lot more specific and a lot more clear with my teaching instructions and instructional strategies”* [Jack experienced stage 3 Rational Discourse: Planning course of action, acquiring knowledge and skills for

implementing one's plan, trying out new roles and relationships]. Jack eventually got through the final practicum, but he was still uncertain about his ability in meeting all the demands of teaching. He said about his teaching, "*It progressed a bit better, but there is a lot of room for improvement*".

In a confronting period of learning, Jack got to experience the full swing of teaching in the final practicum. It was not until the end that Jack's perspective was completely transformed into a deeper appreciation of what it takes to be a teacher. He said, "*My expectations of what a teacher has to prepare, what they actually have to teach, how they have to approach the classroom have definitely changed...I was definitely naïve, I had no inclination and no knowledge of what I was actually getting myself into. At the beginning, everything seemed sweet*". His transformed frame of reference enabled him to see teaching with much deeper insights. He said, "*As a teacher, I now know how much effort and time you have to put in...you need to have the entire package, have enough knowledge of all learning areas...You've got to come up with new, creative ways to enhance their creative thinking. The kids nowadays don't respond to chalk and talk, they don't respond to worksheets. They respond to use of technology, more creative and more innovative ways to learn, that's what you need to do*" [Jack experienced stage 4 Action: new perspectives, empowerment].

Jack went through a lengthy process of contesting and reformulating ideas about the complexity and demands of teaching as his time spent in school gradually intensified and elevated to higher and higher levels of professionally enabling learning experiences. Jack's learning was considered transformative because of the extended time spent in the second placement school, in particular the final block practicum, which triggered Jack to critically reflect on his prior assumptions, and to engage in rational discourse of reformulating and validating new elements of meaning structures.

5.4.2.3 Summary of Jack's learning experience during the TRP

Table 5.9: Jack's Learning Experience

Aspect of Teaching	Informative		Transformative	
	Elaborating existing frame of reference	Learning new frame of reference	Transforming points of view	Transforming habits of mind
Passion for teaching	✓			
Knowledge of Students		✓		
Stance of being a teacher	✓			
Rewarding student				✓
Complexity of teaching				✓

Overall, Jack's story featured less of a change of view about teaching and learning than Emma's. His informative learning experiences were evident in his extended or new understanding of three aspects about teaching and learning, namely, being a passionate teacher, knowledge of students, and finding a balance between being a well-liked teacher and a stern teacher. His transformative learning experiences were evident in his gradually advanced understanding about how to reward good student behaviours and about what teaching really entailed. His learning experiences in these two areas were also reflective of the four stages of the transformative learning process identified in this study.

5.5 Key findings of Residents' Perceptions about Transformative Learning

In this chapter the researcher has examined two data sets for evidence of transformative learning. The survey data indicate that the residents experienced elements of learning that are indicative of a transformative learning process, which is consistent with evidence of changes in perspective. Residents experienced the stage of a disorienting dilemma at the commencement of each of the two school placements. They found that their prior beliefs and expectations about teaching were challenged by their experiences in the two school communities. Both settings were associated with discrepancies between the residents' belief system and their practice

in school. However, these discrepancies decreased markedly as the residents progressed through the program, suggesting that over time they were able to transform their practice to conform with the expectations of the TRP.

The results also show that the residents were cognisant of their personal discontent with their previously assimilated assumptions and beliefs about teaching. They actively engaged in critical self-reflection during each of their placements. Through this process they sought out new perspectives and matched these with their new experiences. They learned to accept new interpretations of their roles and perspectives about their teaching. These changes directly influenced their teaching practice.

The interview data have also revealed the nature of the resident's changed views about teaching. The changes incur a broad range of aspects of teaching. Responses to the open-ended questions in survey 2 indicate that the majority of residents changed their views about the complexity of teaching, classroom management and pedagogy as a result of their learning experience in the TRP. These two data source also demonstrate the growth in residents' confidence in their ability to teach.

Results of data from the interviews with 12 of the residents' were consistent with results of from responses to the open-ended questions in survey 2. Four key themes emerged from the interview data demonstrating that residents' perspective changes were focused on their general understanding about the complexity of teaching, how they managed the real demands of students in classrooms, perceptions about students and perceptions of the teaching profession.

Residents' understanding of teaching was the most prevailing change of perspective that occurred when they were confronted with: their need to adapt to real teaching situations; the demands and dynamics of teaching; how to make adjustments in their teaching to cater for student's needs; how to adapt curriculum to reflect the needs and interests of students. The interview data demonstrated that whereas the majority of the 12 residents reported an informative learning process, which involved either an elaboration of an existing frame of reference, or an addition of new frames of reference about teaching, two of the residents were found to have

experienced a transformation of their point of view or habit of mind, in terms of their understanding about teaching.

The second most prevailing change of perspective in the TRP reported by the residents was classroom management. One of the residents (Stella) was found to have experienced a transformed habit of mind in relation to how to deal with extreme student behaviour. Three other residents were found to have learned a new frame of reference that reflected the adoption of new knowledge and a new, and more appropriate, stance for classroom management.

Residents' changes in perceptions about students and about the teaching profession included examples of learning that were both transformative and informative. One resident (William) showed a transformed point of view in his appreciation of the individual differences among students and how to adapt his teaching to better reflect their needs. All other residents exhibited informative learning process in their learning about student needs. One of these residents (Cathy) also demonstrated a transformative learning process that resulted in an empowered sense of self both as a teacher and a person.

The detailed analysis of the two case study participants' experiences and learning in the TRP provided more insights into the nature of the residents' learning and further evidences of transformative learning. Both of the case study residents were found to have experienced significant transformation in their perspectives about teaching. Informative learning was also found to have occurred. The case studies also indicate that the individual traits of the resident-learner had impacted on the elements of transformative learning that occurred.

The data presented in this chapter reveal that elements of transformative and informative learning were evident in residents' learning processes in the TRP. Transformation of perspectives were found to occur across a spectrum of aspects of learning to teach and they were found to be related to individual Resident-learner characteristics. While transformative learning reflects these individual traits, the common underlying factor related to the Resident's learning experience was that the TRP provided a conducive environment for learning to teach. The learning opportunities embedded in the program provided a catalyst for residents to engage in transformative learning.

CHAPTER 6: TOWARDS A RESIDENCY MODEL FOR LEARNING TO TEACH

6.1 Introduction

Whereas Chapter Four and Chapter Five are focused on the analysis of residents' perceptions about their professional learning experiences, Chapter Six reports on residents' perceptions about the whole TRP. The findings are used to address research question three: *What elements of the TRP support or hinder the professional learning of pre-service teachers?*

The researcher commences with an analysis of data relating to the residents' perceptions about various aspects of the program, especially what motivated them to join the TRP; whether they believed the TRP had met their expectations for learning to teach; what they thought about the quality of their learning experiences; how important they thought different stakeholders and components of the program were for their experience of learning to teach; and what changes they would suggest to enhance the program. Then the key findings of the data analysis will be outlined to conclude this chapter. It should be noted that within this chapter N_1 represents the number of comments and N_2 represents the number of participants.

6.2 Residents' Perceptions of the TRP

6.2.1 Motivation

In interview 1 each of the 12 residents was asked to comment on their motivations for joining the TRP, framed by this question: "*What motivated you to join [name of the university]'s Teacher Residency Program?*" Not surprisingly, the majority of the residents indicated they enrolled in the TRP because of their passion for teaching. They also pointed out they were attracted by some of the features that the TRP had to offer. As a parallel program to the on-campus mode of the Diploma of Education (DipEd) at the university, the TRP appealed to the candidates for its school-based approach to the study of teaching. The following features of the TRP listed in Table 6.1 emerged from the data as the main reasons for prompting the residents to join the program.

Table 6.1: Motivations

Motivation	Number of Comments (N ₁ =21)
Hands-on practical approach	6
Two days a week at school	6
Job prospects	3
Learning on the job	2
Part of the school community	2
Early placement	2

Of the 21 comments collated from the responses to the question, the hands-on practical approach to learning to teach and the two days spent each week in school were the most appealing to the residents. These items targeted the opportunity of first-hand experience to practise teaching and participate in a wide range of activities centring around everyday learning and teaching. Associated with this, another 6 comments were about the continuity of school placement.

These results show that residents were also interested in using the program as a pathway to employment. They believed that time in the school over the course of year would allow them more time to demonstrate their skills and abilities and to establish relationships with potential employers. The opportunity to learn to teach on the job, to be part of school community, and to be at school from the first day were also mentioned and each of these categories accounted for two comments respectively.

Overall, the strongest motivation for undertaking the TRP was related to the school placement component. In essence, the residents wanted to be in school and engaged in practical learning.

6.2.2 Learning expectations

Here the researcher reports on what the residents wanted to learn from the TRP at the commencement of the program, in response to the question: “*What do you expect to learn from [name of the university]’s teacher residency program?*” The results of data are presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Learning Expectations from the TRP at the Beginning of the Course

Expectations	Number of Comments (N ₁ =26)
Classroom management	7
How to be a good teacher	6
Content knowledge	4
Teaching skills and strategies	3
Gaining confidence	2
Curriculum	2
Programming and planning	2

As can be seen in table 6.2 the learning expectation most frequently mentioned by residents was how to manage the classroom. Learning to be a good teacher was the next most frequently mentioned item. Most of the remaining items were about developing specific knowledge and skills: content knowledge, teaching skills and strategies, curriculum, and programming and planning. Two comments were about gaining confidence in teaching. This pattern of responses suggests that the residents aspired to become *good* teachers through their experience in the TRP.

On the completion of the TRP, residents were invited to comment on whether the learning expectations they had at the beginning of course had been met. This question was asked in interview 4: “*Did the TRP match your expectations about learning to teach?*” The results are presented in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Perception of Expectations at End of Course

Perception	Number of Participants (N ₂)
Expectations fully met	8
Expectations partially met	3
Expectations not met	1

Eight residents indicated that the course had met their expectations. For example, James said, “*I am very happy with the course*”. Jack, although he was not as confident in himself as some other residents at the end of the program, believed what he had achieved was more than what he anticipated. He said, “*I think I’ve learnt so much more than I thought I would ever learn*”. David made a similar comment to Jack, stating, “*It probably exceeded the expectations in terms of how*

prepared I feel for heading out into teaching next year and the amount of in-class time you get through the program is invaluable". Unlike some of her peers, Sophia had reservations about the program saying, *"It is a lot to cram in one year"*, but she acknowledged that overall the program did cater for what she needed to learn to teach.

Some residents identified factors that had enabled them to achieve what they expected to learn. For example, John said, "The TRP I think was very structured in terms of how they wanted things to go and what they wanted to expose us to. I think that definitely helped sort out my views on teaching because they gave us a lot of professional development experiences, gave us a lot of different opportunities within the classroom, also one extra day at school. Yeah, I just think that was structured really well, and it helped us learn". And David, who believed the program had exceeded his expectations, explained, "The biggest thing was how much time you actually got in the classroom and how much experience you got". He pointed out further saying, "This program gave you plenty of chances to get experiences". David's opinion was echoed by Ben, who emphasised the importance of being in the classroom in addition to getting connected to the school community and having high quality course work from university. Rebecca also valued the time spent in the classroom. She said, "I wouldn't have done this course if it was not a residency program. I would have pulled out...all my learning occurred in the classroom. If it wasn't actually in the classroom learning I wouldn't have felt qualified at the end of the year and if I was just doing this on campus, I probably would have pulled out and thought about doing a degree".

However, three residents indicated the course did not meet their expectation fully. Emma, for example, was not completely satisfied with the maths unit of the program because she felt that it was *"too constructivist"*. Ashleigh considered that the course had met her learning expectations for maths and classroom management, but she had reservations about literacy and assessment assignments. She elaborated, *"The maths unit and the behaviour management were really good. The literacy I felt, there was just so much content for the time that we had and it was sort of like here, there and everywhere...when it came to actually putting it together to make a literacy block...I didn't even know where to begin...I wished we had done more on planning and sort of been given more examples about what a literacy block should*

look like, and what should be incorporated...the literacy side didn't meet my expectation...I felt like we needed a lot more". She further commented, "Some of the assessments we got [from university] weren't as practical as I would have liked them to be...like the maths and literacy we had to do forward planning for our prac. In theory it was good but it wasn't flexible enough. What I had to do in my assignments was to demonstrate best practices, but that was not what we were doing in our schools. It was like doing double".

Cathy was the only resident who felt the course didn't meet her expectations at all. She said, "The course is too short. We've learnt so much but literacy and maths needs more...I feel...Literacy and maths...was not presented deeply enough... it is the time...if we had that extra six months, it would give us extra experiences and give us opportunities to have more variety. I feel too that some of the mentor teachers needed to be screened a little bit more..."

These perceptions about resident's pre-course and post-course expectations suggest that the course catered for what the residents wanted to learn, particularly in the area of behaviour management and content knowledge for teaching. Classroom experience appeared to play an important part of residents' learning. Yet, there were also some aspects in the course that needed to be addressed, including the depth of the units delivered on campus, and the length of the course.

6.2.3 Quality of experience in learning to teach

Residents' perceptions about the quality of their learning experience are presented in this section. These perceptions were relevant for determining the supportive and hindering elements of the TRP for residents' learning to teach. Data presented below were derived from two sources. 1) from question 13 in interview 4: "Did the TRP provide a good professional learning experience for you? Why or why not?" 2) from the second question of the open-ended question section in survey 2:

"What do you think about the quality of the professional learning experiences that you have had during the TRP overall? Why?" An elaboration of each follows.

6.2.3.1 Interview data

Table 6.4: Perceptions of Quality of Professional Learning Experience

Perceptions	Number of participants (N ₂ =11)
High quality	6
Good quality but need improvement	5

The responses suggest that overall the residents interviewed were satisfied with the quality of the professional learning experience in the TRP. Six residents rated the quality as high, without mentioning anything negative. For example, John said the program was *“the best way to help us learn in terms of its two-day a week placement arrangement and those hugely helpful PD opportunities, which gave me the background experience needed within the classroom”*. James also found the quality of his professional learning experience *“very good”*, and he believed *“It is more than anything to do with the experiences in the classroom and doing stuff with the children; that is why it is good, because of the building and layering of those experiences”*. David gave credit as well to the fact that both of the university course work and school placement components were dovetailed and worked well for him. He said, *“...the lecturers are very experienced and up to date in terms of research...the sessions were very practical and engaging...having the time in school and learning by doing is invaluable”*. Ben also rated the quality very high because of *“the experiences in the schools, the support around that, the quality of the units and the content”*. He further commented, *“If someone is thinking about being a teacher, I would definitely recommend this is the best way to go about it if they could”*. Jack pointed out his professional learning experience had been *“outstanding”*, mainly because he had learned a lot from the two mentor teachers, saying, *“Having two mentors’ modelling gave me more perspectives as to what I could do”*.

Five residents acknowledged the quality had been good, but some areas needed attention. For example, Emma pointed out that she didn’t have enough support in her second school placement, and that the workload was very high. However, she was very happy with the way assignments were arranged, such as when university lecturers gave her very good modelling in using rubrics in assessment. She was also pleased with the relevant and professional feedback she

received from her mentor teacher, and she was satisfied overall with the quality of the lectures delivered, she said, *“It was an incredibly intensive nine months. That aside, I think they’ve done absolutely everything they could do in that time constraint, to prepare you for the job”*. Stella, expressed a similar opinion to Emma, stating that she believed overall the quality of her learning experience in the TRP was very high, but she had encountered problems with the science unit. She felt that the assignments for the science unit didn’t fit in with what was happening in the classroom. She said, *“There needs to be more communication between the theory side and the practical side”*. Additionally, Stella indicated that she would prefer the course work content to be dealt with in greater depth at the university, *“a bit more meaty”* in her own words. Sophia mentioned similar frustrations in relation to the assignments of the science unit, plus discrepancies between university theory and school practice in learning how to teach literacy. The positive for Sophia was the peer support she had and the benefits from two school placements.

6.2.3.2 Survey data

In this open-ended question section of survey 2, the residents were asked to comment on the overall quality of their professional learning experiences. A total of 20 responses to this question were collated. Although different words were used, all residents’ responses indicate that they thought the quality of the professional learning experiences provided by the TRP had been high. Examples of residents’ ratings include, *“very high”*, *“excellent”*, *“fantastic”*, *“brilliant”*, *“invaluable”* and *“positive”*. One resident stated that that he felt ready to start a teaching career, saying, *“The residency program has a very high quality of learning experience delivered by very experienced and passionate people.”*. Another Resident pointed out *“The professional learning experience was the best part of the course”*. A few themes emerged from residents’ elaborations on the high quality of their professional learning experiences, as reported in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Themes of Attributions

Themes	Number of participants (N ₂ =20)
School-based professional learning	9
Opportunity to learn alongside Mentor	5
Dedication of the university Academic Staff	3
No specific comments	3

Opportunities for school-based professional learning were reported by nine residents. As one of the two components of the TRP, school placement was designed to provide the residents with an authentic learning environment and maximize their exposure to the core business of a school. Spending two days a week in the placement school throughout the year allowed the residents substantial amount of time to be within the classroom to observe what an experienced teacher did, test out theories learned at university and reflect and improve on their own practice as a teacher. This was highlighted in one resident's comment, *"The time in the classroom is invaluable and gives perspective to the theory. It also builds your confidence and experiences and connects you to the school community"*. Another resident said, *"I think the residency program is the best way to become a teacher. The amount of time and effort that was spent in the classroom and to recognise issues, and problems within the classroom..."*. It appeared that the hands-on approach and the practical nature of the placement had also contributed to the residents' perceptions of the quality of professional learning experiences. For example, one resident said, *"The weekly practicum in this program was priceless and where I learned the most because I learn best through observations"*. Another said, *"The program was excellent though gruelling. The practical experiences you gain by the program are valuable as you practise what you learn, and work out any problems there and then. You have the opportunity to observe, discuss and then practise the new strategies"*.

Five of the residents considered the opportunity to learn alongside an experienced mentor teacher as important. For example, one resident stated, *"I think the overall quality has been very high. The opportunity to learn from highly experienced educators was priceless"*. Another one pointed out, *"...being able to witness teacher's modelling was very beneficial"*. The experience of being in two different schools also made it possible for residents to work with two mentor teachers, which allow them to be exposed to different teaching styles. One resident gave an illuminating comment regarding this, saying, *"The quality of the learning experience I found was very high. This is simply because of the fact that to take on a resident, a mentor teacher would have to be fully committed to the residents and have a wealth of knowledge and/or experiences to give. I was lucky enough that in semester one, I had a mentor with over 30 plus years of experience in teaching and in semester two I had a mentor teacher who was relatively fresh out of university"*

and retained all the new and exciting ways to teach. So in that sense, I had a very good cross-over of knowledge and experiences”.

Three residents’ responses suggest that, the quality of the theoretical studies provided by university academics also played an important part in their positive professional learning experiences. One resident stated, *“I think the quality of the residency program is very high. The coordinator and lecturers are extremely dedicated”*. Another resident said, *“I feel it has been a very high level of learning and teaching which has prepared me to be a beginning teacher. Almost all the lecturers have been at the top of their fields, and were very passionate about what they were teaching, and our education as well”*.

6.2.4 Support mechanisms and program elements for learning to teach

In the foregoing sections, interview and survey data were presented to address residents’ perceptions of various aspects of the TRP. These collective accounts have illustrated the overall response of the residents to the program. In what follows, data drawn from survey 1 and survey 2 are presented on students’ attitudes towards the stakeholders (perceptions of support mechanisms) and key program elements of the TRP (perceptions of program elements).

6.2.4.1 Support mechanisms

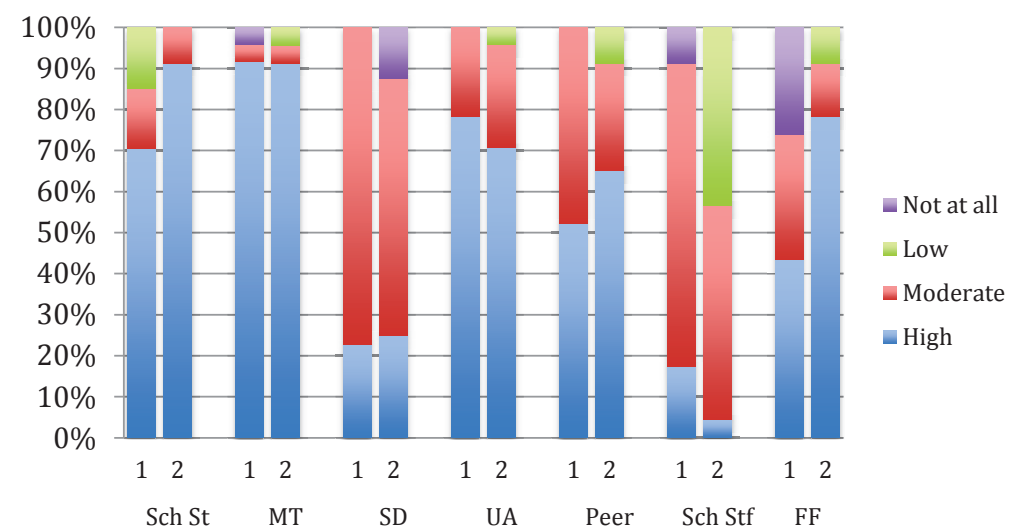
Throughout the course, residents came into contact with different people in various contexts. In the school placement context, they had opportunities to work closely with mentor teachers and site directors and to engage with other staff in the whole school community. Residents also spent a substantial amount of time inside or outside of the classroom with their students. At the university, they undertook theory-based educational studies under the guidance of academic staff, and exchanged ideas and shared resources with their peers. In their personal environment, they had the chance to talk about their studies with their families and friends, and seek support from them. These were the key stakeholders who were considered to be relevant to the residents’ learning.

The following section describes residents’ perceptions of the importance of the key stakeholders to their learning. The data were drawn from the questions in Part A (Professional Learning Experience) of survey 1 and survey 2 (See Appendix E and Appendix F), in which the residents were asked to indicate how important they

thought different people had been to their professional learning experience during the TRP. The residents were given four options of *not at all important*, *low level of importance*, *moderate level of importance*, *very high level of importance*. The results of the data are presented in

Note. Sch St=school student; MT= mentor teacher; SD=site director; UA=university academics; Sch Stf= school staff; FF= family and friend

Figure 6.1.



Note. Sch St=school student; MT= mentor teacher; SD=site director; UA=university academics; Sch Stf= school staff; FF= family and friend

Figure 6.1: Importance of stakeholders

As

Note. Sch St=school student; MT= mentor teacher; SD=site director; UA=university academics; Sch Stf= school staff; FF= family and friend

Figure 6.1 shows, residents sought support from multiple sources. Overall there was little apparent difference between the results of survey 1 and 2 across the seven categories of people. However, the results show variance in terms of how important the residents considered each category was to their professional learning. For example, mentor teachers and school students were rated predominately as highly important in both surveys. University academics were also perceived as important. In these three categories there was almost no occurrence of either *Low* or *Not at all*, except for one resident who rated the mentor teacher’s importance as *Not at all*. Since this was an exception, the researcher assumes there had been a clash with this mentor teacher. For these three categories the results were found to be consistent

between survey 1 and 2, indicating people within classrooms in school and university seemed to provide residents with the most support. Compared with mentor teachers, school students and university academics, site directors and other placement school staff were viewed as less important. These results indicate that the residents valued support from people with direct contacts, more than from those whom they worked less closely with. The interactions that the residents had with their mentor teachers and university academics far exceeded those they had with other people in the TRP. Working alongside their mentor teachers during the two distributed days every week allowed the residents to learn good teaching practices, accumulate resources, seek feedback and criticism from them. Coming back to university every Friday, residents worked with academic staff on the theories of teaching and they also discussed the issues that had arisen in school while implementing the theories they learned.

Figure 6.2 shows that families and friends were regarded as much less important in both survey 1 and 2. Nevertheless, there was a considerable shift from the lower end of the importance scale to the higher end, which was not evident in the case of site director or other placement school staff.

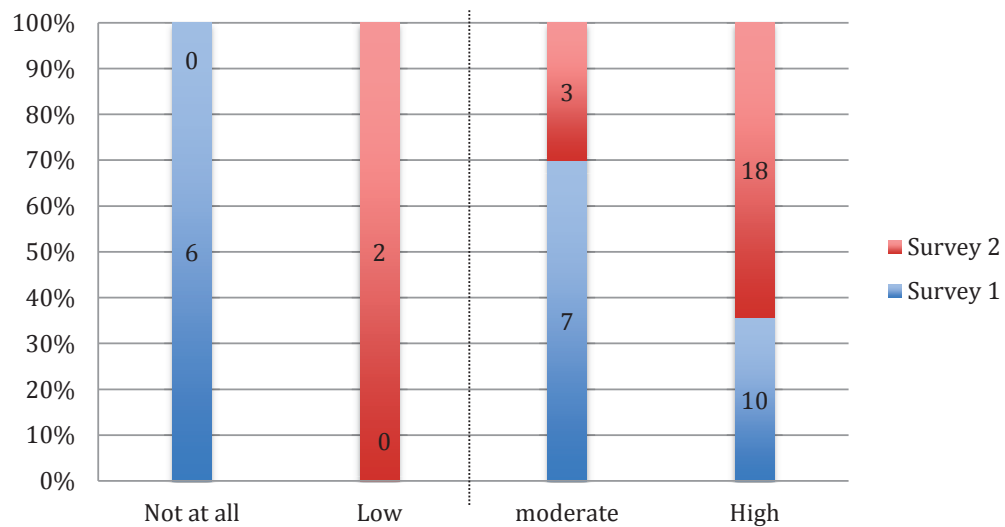


Figure 6.2: Importance of families and friends

The total number of the lower end (*not at all and low*) compared with the higher end (*moderate and high*) was 6 ($6+0=6$): 17 ($7+10=17$) in survey 1, and 2 ($2+0=2$): 21 ($3+18=21$) in survey 2. It is apparent that families and friends became far more important to the resident towards the end of the program when 18 residents

rated families and friends as highly important. This indicated that at this stage families and friend were regarded as important as university academics. The implication of the shift from lower importance to higher importance level is two-fold. On the one hand, the program was more stressful for residents towards the end of the TRP. The mentor Teacher and other school staff assumed by then they should at least know what was required of them to teach, what content needed to be taught, and where to locate resources and so forth. Changes in students, year group, school environment, or even the mentor teacher posed new challenges for the residents. Besides, there was extra pressure with the planning of the five-week consecutive and independent teaching for their final assessed practicum. Thus, support and sympathies from families and friends became more important as the residents coped with these challenges. On the other hand, as their knowledge of teaching had increased, and residents had become more realistic about the complex and demanding nature of teaching as a profession, there was a greater need for them to seek advice and help from families and friends who they felt safe with.

In summary, the results indicate that learning to teach for the residents appeared to be a complicated and lengthy process involving support from different people. Mentor teachers, students and university academics had the strongest impact on residents' professional learning experience.

6.2.4.2 Program elements for learning to teach

The purpose of this section is for the researcher to explore residents' perceptions about the impact of elements in both the school placement and concurrent university course work components of the TRP on their professional learning. These data were drawn from Section B (Professional Learning Experience) of survey 1 and survey 2, in response to questions that asked the residents to indicate how important they thought various elements of the TRP had been to their professional learning experiences.

As presented in Table 6.6, the 17 elements listed in the surveys fell into three categories.

Table 6.6: Categorization of Survey Elements

Category	Feature	Code
school placement experiences	classroom observation	Cr Obs
	weekly meeting with mentor teachers	MT Mtg
	four-week assessed block placement in semester 2	ABP
	five-week final block placement in semester 2	FABP
	opportunity to work alongside a mentor teacher	WWMT
	spontaneous feedback from mentor teacher	MTFb
school placement pattern	two-day per week residency in placement school	SP
	the first school placement for semester 1 being wholly in one school	1 st PM Sch1
	the second school placement for semester 2 being wholly in a different school	2 nd PM Sch 2
	placement starting at the beginning of the school year	Early PM
	belonging to a residency cohort in residency school	RC
university course experiences	2-weeks university intensives at the beginning of each semester	UI
	one-day-a-week concurrent course work in university	CCW
	workshops in school	Wshp
	feedbacks from university academic staff	Uni Fb
	belonging to a cohort in university classes	Uni Ch
	reflective session on teaching	Reflection

To rate the importance of all the above elements, residents were given four options of *not at all important*, *low level of importance*, *moderate level of importance*, *very high level of importance*. The results pertaining to school placement experience are presented in Figure 6.3.

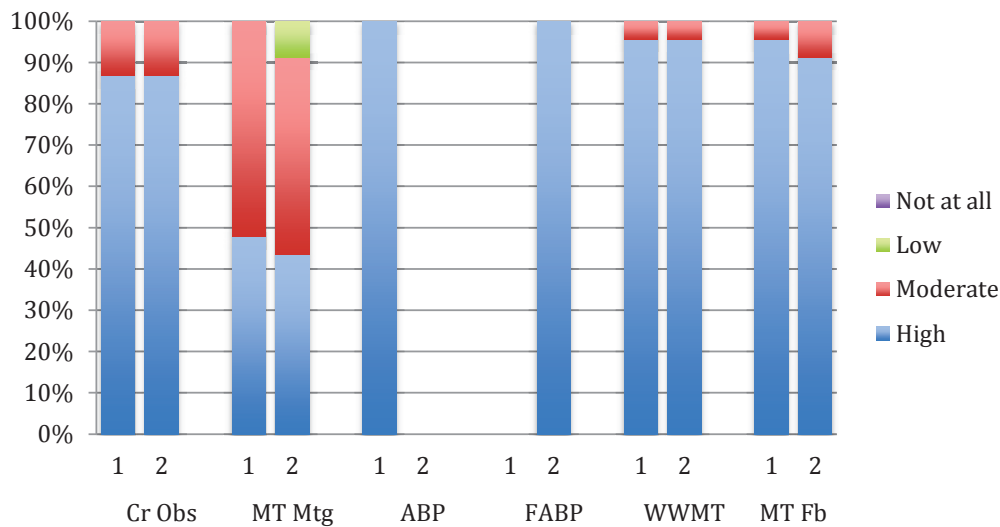


Figure 6.3: School placement experiences

The overwhelmingly large percentage of *high* and *moderate* responses indicate the residents' perceptions regarding their school placement experience were predominately positive. All residents consistently considered the two assessed block practicums in both survey 1 and survey 2 as highly important. The opportunities to observe other teachers in the classroom at the beginning of the course, to work alongside mentor teachers, and to receive feedback were considered as highly important by more than 90% of residents in both surveys. In comparison, the mentor meeting was perceived as less positive than the others in this category; more than half of the residents rated it as *moderate* and 10% even rated it low in the second survey. Yet, on the whole it is evident that all the elements embedded in the school placement component of the TRP were considered by the residents as supportive opportunities for learning to teach.

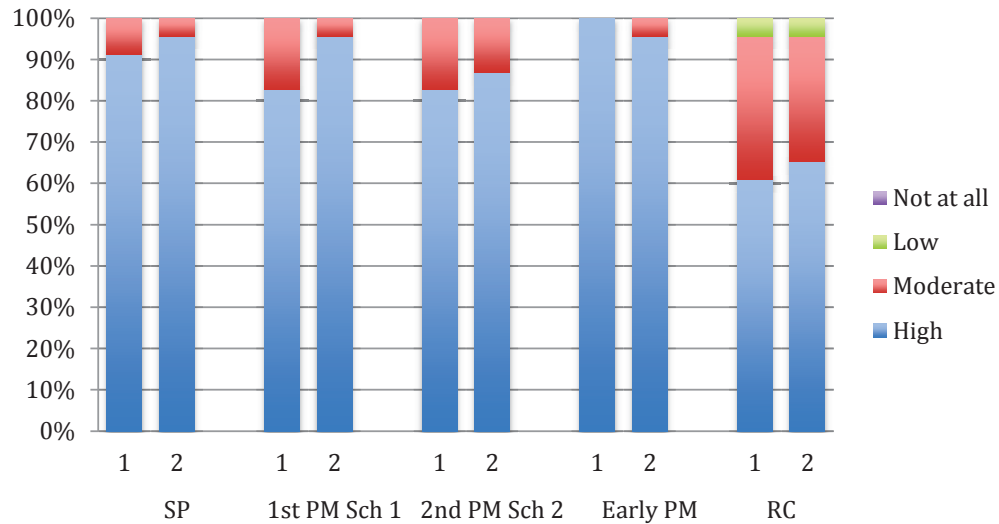


Figure 6.4 The placement pattern

School placement (Figure 6.4) is one of the most distinctive features of the TRP, which distinguishes the TRP from the traditional teacher education programs. The unique pattern of the placement design provided the residents with an effective way of learning through an authentic and situated environment. The school placement ratings suggest that the residents' attitudes were predominantly positive.

As the figure shows, 100% of the residents in survey 1 and approximately 95% in survey 2 rated early placement as *high*. Similar results were found in residents' feeling about having continuous two-day per week placement, with approximately 90% as *high* in survey 1 and 95% in survey 2. This pattern of results is also evident for the first and second placement, with rating increasing from 80% in survey 1 and survey 2, to 95% in survey 1 and 85% in survey 2. As for being grouped as a cohort in the placement school, the data indicates residents were less a positive result given that only around 60% of the residents rated this feature as highly important in both surveys.

In the category of university course work experiences, residents' response to the influence of the six features of the TRP to their learning are presented in Figure 6.5.

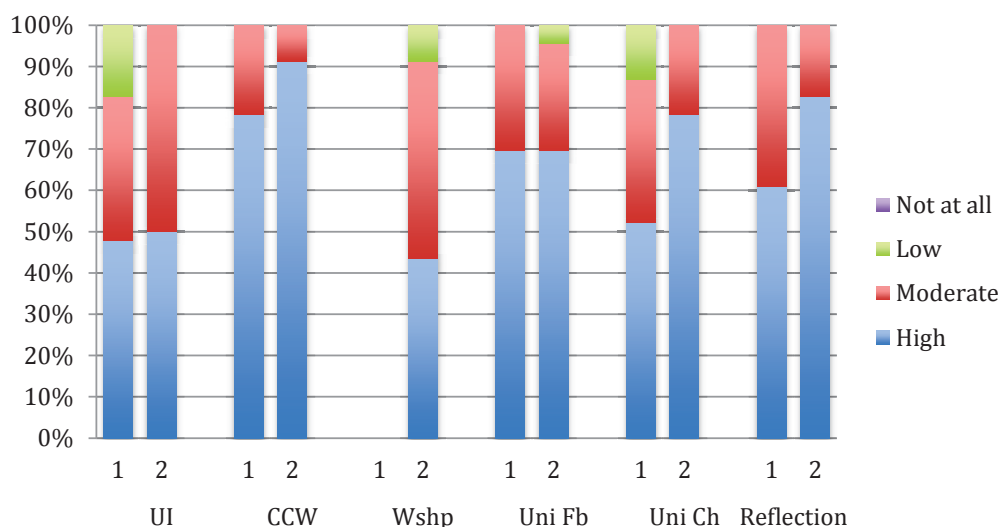


Figure 6.5: University course work experiences

There was more variation in residents' responses to the university course work component than the school placement component. Of all the elements listed in this category, concurrent work received the most positive response with almost 80% and 90% of *highs*. The results of other elements, including the two weeks of intensive course work at the beginning of school term one, the opportunity to learn in a cohort, and to reflect in university classrooms, showed an increase of positive responses toward the end of the program, evidenced by a shift from *low* to *moderate* for uni intensive and *moderate* to *high* for uni cohort and reflection. Whereas residents' responses to university feedback were rather consistent with almost 70% of the residents rating them highly important in both surveys, and a small shift of *moderate* to *low* in the second survey. Up to 90% of the residents rated attending workshops in the second half of the program as *Moderate to High*.

In summary, the results of an analysis of these data suggest residents' perceptions about the school placement and the university course work components were considerably positive. However, the residents have attached greater importance to the learning opportunities afforded by the school placement component of the TRP. This concurs with some of the findings from the interview data presented in the previous sections, that spending an extended period of time in school played a crucial role in residents' development as a teachers.

6.2.5 Suggested changes to the program

Upon completion of the course, residents were invited to suggest changes that could enhance the program in the future. In interview 4, and in the open-ended question section of survey 2, they were asked, “*Is there anything you think needs to change during the TRP to improve your experiences of learning to teach?*” Residents’ responses revealed the challenges and obstacles they had encountered during the program. The data also yield evidence for determining the elements of the TRP that were perceived as hindering to the professional learning of the residents.

6.2.5.1 Interview data

Table 6.7: Changes to Enhance the TRP

Changes	Number of comments (N ₁ =29)	Percentage
University Course work	12	43%
School Placement	6	20%
Mentoring	5	17%
Extending the Length of the TRP	3	10%
Work-load	2	7%
Others	1	3%

There were a total of 29 comments collated from 12 residents, focusing on possible changes that could be made to enhance the TRP. Of these 12 were related to the university course work component and six were about the school placement component. Residents’ suggestion for what could be done to improve their learning outcomes in university included: theory studies being dealt with in greater depth; increasing the time spent in university for learning theories; revising the science unit; focusing more on literacy planning and programming; providing structured and proven program samples; rearranging the order of the units; providing accessible staff support other than just course coordinator. As for improving the school placement component, the residents suggested more consideration should be given to the allocation of placement schools to each resident, and to the timing of professional development workshops. Residents also suggested there should be better alignment between the university course work studies and the school practice because some residents found what they learned in their units at university were

disconnected from what was happening within the placement schools. One of the residents, James, suggested a week of observation in school term three could be added to the TRP to help residents adjust to the new school and allow them more time to get to know the students.

Five comments related to the improvement of mentoring. The residents suggested teachers should be screened before they are appointed to be mentor teachers to make sure they have all the necessary attributes for effective mentoring. Residents also suggested further attention should be attached to pairing up suitable mentor teachers for individual residents. They believed that availability should not be the deciding factor in appointing mentor teachers, who should be provided with more professional development opportunities and financial incentives for their mentoring role.

Three comments related to extending the length of the course. Some residents indicated one year was far from sufficient to learn all the things required to be a teacher. For example, Jack suggested that the course should be expanded to one and a half or to two years. He said, *“It is so full-on and stressful, it is very difficult to cram everything in one year”*. Another suggested an alternative solution to this problem would be to reduce the number of assignments and spread them out at different time points in the course.

6.2.5.2 Survey data

From the survey data, residents’ feedback to the question was more limited. Although data collated showed that the TRP had earned commendations amongst the residents for providing high quality professional learning experiences, there were areas that needed to be modified. One recommendation focused on increasing the length of the program. Another recommendation concentrated on the organisation of the units offered by the university. Lastly, one of the residents suggested the screening of mentor teachers to ensure residents are provided with quality in-school support. Thus, despite being fewer in number, the results from the survey data appeared to be consistent with what had emerged from the interview data regarding residents’ suggestions for enhancing the program.

6.3 Summary of Key Findings about Residents' Perceptions of the TRP

Data about residents' responses to various aspects of the TRP have been analysed and the results presented in this chapter to identify the supporting and hindering elements of the program from their perspective. Key findings of data are summarised below.

The primary incentive for the residents' to join the TRP was the school placement component. Residents recognised the value of being provided with an opportunity to gain hands-on practical experience and having the continuity of immersion in an authentic school environment. Residents' expectations for learning were found to be focused on gaining content knowledge, developing skills for teaching, and building confidence as a teacher, which are reflective of the three domains of learning in the WACOT Professional Standards. But, learning how to manage a classroom was the key point of interest for the residents.

The majority of the residents who took part in the interview reported that the TRP met their learning expectations, with some suggesting the program exceeded their expectations. Most of the positive comments were related to the benefits of being in the school and the first-hand experiences of classroom teaching.

In terms of the quality of the learning experience during the TRP, residents' responses were predominately affirmative. The residents attributed their satisfaction of learning experiences to both the school placement and the concurrent university course work component. Their comments gave emphasis to the two-day per week practicum arrangement for building up real classroom experiences and the benefits of learning alongside an experienced mentor teacher in the context of a real school classroom. Residents also gave credit to the professionalism of the university academics, and the quality of teaching.

Those who felt their expectations were only partially met or not met, identified five core issues: the length of the course; the high workload; the depth of the theory learned in their university subjects; conflicts that arose between university assignments and the placement school teaching requirements; and the discrepancies between university-learned best practices and the classroom practices adopted by one or two mentor teachers.

Residents indicated these issues need to be addressed to further enhance the program. They suggested the university component could be optimised through deepening, broadening and rearranging the core units studied. The residents also suggested improvements in the quality of mentoring, which could be achieved through more thorough screening of the candidates, to ensure that the mentor was aligned with the learning styles and needs of the residents. The residents also wanted their mentor teachers and school placement program to provide them with more professional development opportunities. Residents further suggested there was a need for greater coherence between these two components. In addition, there was strong support to see the length of course extended and the workload to be reduced.

While the data indicate that residents acknowledge the influence of all stakeholders in the program on their learning, mentor teachers, students in the school and university academics were perceived as the most important. In terms of the elements of the TRP, greater importance was attached to those in the school placement component rather than those of the university course work elements, but acknowledgement was given to the contribution of campus-based learning. Overwhelmingly, while challenging, the TRP had provided the residents' with a positive experience of learning to teach.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the discussion of key findings that emerged from the analysis of data in Chapter Four, Five, and Six. Through the lens of the research questions, residents' self-reported experiences in learning during the TRP were examined from three different perspectives. The first perspective was gleaned from responses to the first research question: *What perceptions do pre-service teachers have about their professional learning experiences during the Teacher Residency Program*. As presented in Chapter Four the researcher analysed these responses and presented an account of the nature of the residents' learning at various stages of the program and the development of their sense of identity as a teacher. The second perspective emanated from the second research question: *Do pre-service teachers' perceptions provide evidence of a transformative learning experience during the Teacher Residency Program*, which was presented in Chapter Five, with an emphasis on the residents' learning experience during the TRP and whether these reflected a transformative learning process. The third perspective was framed by research question: *What elements of the TRP support or hinder the professional learning of pre-service teachers*. The results presented in Chapter Six outlined the aspects of the TRP that were perceived as supportive to residents' professional development, and those that were perceived as hindering to their learning. The findings for each of these research questions are reviewed in the next section in conjunction with relevant literature to provide a collective story of how the TRP challenged and supported these adult learners for a future career in teaching. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of a residency approach to teacher education.

7.2 Discussion of Responses to Research Questions

7.2.1 Research question one: residents' perceptions of professional learning experiences

There are two aspects to residents' perceptions of their learning experience during the TRP: perceptions of residents' professional learning, and perceptions of

their professional identity. The researcher's discussion of the residents' perspectives of their professional learning has four dimensions: the elements of learning they identified; the nature of both the positive and negative learning experiences they reported; and the impact that these experiences had on their view of teaching. Discussion of the development of residents' teacher identity is also subdivided into residents' perceptions about being a teacher; their sense of belonging to the placement schools; and their views about the teaching profession. Residents' perceptions of a) their overall confidence as a teacher, b) in lesson planning, c) whole class teaching, and d) assessment will be discussed in relation to the development of their professional identity.

7.2.1.1 Perceptions of professional learning

The results related to residents' professional learning show that multiple gains and achievements took place at different stages of their learning process and that this learning reflected the three domains of Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement. Residents' learning processes manifested positive and negative experiences. These experiences supported or hindered residents' development and, as discussed, impacted in various ways on their views of teaching.

Residents' perceptions of the four dimensions of professional learning outlined above are discussed in relation to the stages of residents learning during the TRP. Through looking at the continuum of their learning in this section, the researcher describes the focus of learning in each phase and interprets the patterns of change. The researcher then discusses how this learning process contributed to the residents' developmental process of learning to teach and what elements of learning were involved. Table 7.1 summarises the most important elements of learning that the residents identified throughout the TRP, drawn from the analysis of the residents' perceptions about learning that was presented in Chapter Four. The classification of the elements under the domains of the professional standards helps to identify the focus of learning at each stage.

Table 7.1: Aspects of Learning at Different Stages of the TRP

Stages of TRP	Perceptions					
	School Placement 1	Domain	1st half of School Placement 2	Domain	2nd Half of School Placement 2	Domain
Achievements	Classroom management	PP	Curriculum	PK	Classroom management	PP
	Planning and assessing	PP	Classroom management	PP	Planning and assessing	PP
	Student	PK	Learning and teaching	PP	Teaching practice	PK
			Professional learning	PE	Curriculum	PK
					Student	PK
Positive Learning Exp	Partnership	PE	Partnership	PE	Professional learning	PE
	Teaching practice	PP				
Negative Learning Exp	Professional learning	PE	Classroom management	PP	Planning and assessing	PP
	Professional Responsibility	PE	Partnership	PE	Partnership	PE
			Professional learning	PE		
Impacts	Professional responsibility	PE	Professional learning	PE	Professional learning	PE
	Professional learning	PE	Professional responsibility	PE	Professional responsibility	PE

Note. PK=Professional Knowledge; PP=Professional Practice; PE=Professional Engagement; Exp=Experience

Residents' learning for the first placement was centred on understanding students, developing and maintaining effective learning environments, and planning appropriate lessons. These elements of learning were found to relate most strongly to knowledge of students, and knowledge of classroom management and lesson planning, and were deemed to be consistent with the Professional Knowledge and Professional Practice domains respectively.

This early focus on effective classroom management reflects the importance of this skill for beginning teachers. Darling-Hammond and Bransford's (2005) description of this professional attribute points to its complex nature. For example,

Classroom management encompasses many practices integral to teaching, such as developing relationships, structuring respectful classroom communities where students can work productively; organising productive work around a meaningful curriculum; teaching moral development and citizenship; making decisions about timing and other aspects of instructional planning; successfully motivating children to learn; and encouraging parent involvement (p. 327).

In this study classroom management emerged as a focal area for learning. The residents emphasised this aspect of learning more than any other. Comments about their achievements in classroom management were raised by the residents in both the first and second school placements.

In the first school placement the residents' perceptions of their learning about classroom management focused on their attainment of a spectrum of preliminary competencies that included: organising classroom routines, structuring the physical classroom layout, maintaining an orderly and effective learning environment, rewarding good behaviour and responding to misconduct, while maintaining student attention and engaging students in learning activities. Sophisticated approaches to classroom management were not evident at this stage. However, the residents' experience in the classroom at this very early stage in the TRP provided them with a valuable opportunity to begin to tackle what is considered to be the most complex aspect of learning to teach (Silvestri, 2001; Stallion & Zimpher, 1991).

The second focal point of learning in the first placement was lesson planning. This aspect of learning is identified with the domain of Professional Practice. Learning to plan a lesson required residents to integrate knowledge and skills they acquired from their university course work, along with the input they received from their mentor teachers and other staff in their placement schools. Residents' understanding of good practices in lesson planning also appeared to develop gradually and was framed by a cycle of learning resulting from planning and feedback. The cycle of learning involved the residents going through repeated processes of writing their lesson plan, revising it after discussion with their mentor teacher, implementing it in class, and reflecting on its effectiveness and appropriateness in relation to student outcomes.

Another focal point of learning was knowledge of students in the Professional Knowledge domain. Teachers' knowledge about students has been

identified as one of most important components of a knowledge base for teaching () . And knowledge of students has been outlined in the National Professional Standards for Teaching and the WACOT Standards used in this study, stipulate the breadth of this knowledge and states that teachers should,

Know the learning capabilities of their students and are aware of the factors that influence their learning; acknowledge and respond to the social, cultural, historical and religious background of the student they teach and value their diversity; develop an understanding of students' skills, interests and prior achievement and the potential impacts of these factors on achieving appropriate learning outcome; know and understand the use appropriate assessment strategies to assist in planning student learning experiences (WACOT, 2010, p.2).

Residents' learning about students at the very early stage of the TRP were reported to be focused on establishing a good rapport with students, putting boundaries in place, and getting to know each of them as individuals. The data have revealed that the lengthy school placement component of the TRP created an inclusive environment where the teacher and student relationship thrived. Although the residents reported that this was not an easy task. As most of the class sizes in the placement schools were above 20 students, the residents found that they were challenged even at the basic level of learning the name of students. Other aspects about students, including their interests, personalities, ethnic origins posed a greater challenge. As for learning to interact with students appropriately, this brought in many other professional elements, including professional understandings about the psychology of children's behaviour and strategies for classroom management.

The data from this study indicate that although residents were provided with opportunities at university to learn relevant theories about students, it was the sustained school-based daily encounters with students that were more important. Residents' engagement with students over time assisted them to develop the strategies they needed to establish healthy relationships with students and to acquire meaningful understandings about students' learning and motivations. Nevertheless, the data demonstrate that during the first placement the residents' knowledge of students was focused on 'knowing' students. This knowledge was essential in ensuring the residents were able to meet their performance such as in classroom management. Responses from the residents at this stage indicated they did not have

the deeper level of understanding to reflect the learning styles and academic abilities of individual students in their actual teaching, as described in the WACOT Professional Standards. Thus, during the first placement, although the residents were focused on their knowledge of students, they were not able to accommodate deeper aspects related to student learning. At this early stage in the TRP, it appeared that residents' learning was intuitively focused on getting to know students, so that they might begin to teach them.

These patterns of the residents' learning in their first placement correspond with Fuller and Brown (1975), who reported that the initial stage of student teacher professional development was focused on themselves, on managing the classroom, and on aspects of teaching that helped them to survive in the classroom.

During the first half of school placement 2, residents' learning about curriculum in the domain of Professional Knowledge emerged as the prime focus of learning. Interview responses indicated that the residents continued to learn about the students and the curriculum and that they continued to strive to bring various aspects of professional practice together. There were signs of a greater level of sophistication and depth in the residents' learning, whereby they were acquiring more developmentally advanced knowledge and skills for teaching. This was embodied in residents' recognition of, and response to, the students' developmental stages, and to the diversity of students' learning needs. At this stage the residents also appeared to have developed a stronger awareness of their own professional learning in terms of the year level they were teaching. The residents reported that were feeling more able to make adjustments to complement the demands of the learning context. Some of these changes appeared to be as a response to the second placement school. While this was initially challenging for most of the residents, the change in school appeared to prompt further professional learning. By giving residents a second placement, the TRP required the residents to see a wider spectrum of teaching styles, student learning abilities and school cultures. The experience of the two different settings was challenging but it helped the residents to learn to increase their awareness of new teaching issues. This also helped the residents form more inclusive perspectives on learning to teach, and better judgment on themselves as teachers.

The latter stage of school placement 2 saw residents' biggest growth in Professional Practice. As the residents took part in their the final block practicum,

they were responsible for five weeks of consecutive independent teaching, and required to use their own program prepared in advance during the first half of school placement 2. This increased time spent in the classroom, and the pressure to meet intensive requirements of maintaining good learning environment for their full-time teaching, seemed to serve as a catalyst for residents' further development. Residents' learning was focused more keenly on the skills and strategies they needed to manage classroom situations. And at this stage residents reported growth in understanding the underlying principles of classroom management, a more refined and realistic approach towards student behaviour, classroom interruptions, and the dynamics and vibes of interactions with students.

During this period residents had also indicated attainment in planning and assessing, and teaching practice within the domain of Professional Practice. As for the Professional Knowledge domain, the interview evidence suggests that the residents had developed an awareness of linking the needs of students to the curriculum. They had become more aware of balancing the individual needs of diverse students with the requirements of the curriculum and the learning goals of the larger student cohort (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005) This suggests that residents' consciousness of students learning enabled them to take account of a broader range of factors that could influence student engagement and learning.

At this final stage of the TRP, the some residents were engaging in all of the professional tasks of independent teaching. Overall the cohort demonstrated a range of competencies that included identifying learning goals, preparing lesson plans, collecting teaching resources, and drafting worksheets through to classroom teaching stage, where they conducted lessons using instructional techniques. They were able to monitor classroom environments, adapt to classroom interruptions, undertake effective evaluation of their teaching through marking worksheets, assessing students' learning outcomes, and adjusting future lesson plans. Beyond the immediate classroom they were also interacting with parents, undertaking playground duties, attending school assemblies, and so on.

The discussion so far has concentrated on residents' perceived main learning focuses at different stages of the TRP, and the implications of these focuses on residents' professional development. In what follows, the discussion will be centred

on the most prominent positive or negative learning experiences that residents had at the different stages of the TRP.

During the first placement, partnership in the Professional Engagement domain was the first thing that the residents associated with strong positive feelings about their learning. Establishing and maintaining a collaborative partnership with members of the school and the wider community was an essential part of them becoming a teaching professional. The structure of the TRP allowed the residents to be in continual and active contact with their students and other teaching professionals. Residents' positive feelings towards partnership appeared to be dominantly related to the relationship with their mentor teacher and the other teachers in the placement school. This suggests that scaffolding and support from the mentor teacher played a pivotal role in enhancing residents' professional learning experience. This corresponds with Hobson et al. (2009) who concluded from their extensive review of the literature that "mentoring is an important and effective, perhaps the most effective, form of supporting the professional development of beginning teachers" (p 209). Caires and Almeida (2007) argued that the effectiveness and the productivity of student teaching practice depended significantly on support by the school supervisors. During the first placement, residents started to form concepts, schemas or scripts related to the process of teaching. To be able to adapt these schemas to the established classroom routines in which they were teaching, they needed to have someone experienced to model themselves on, and to articulate the significance of what was happening around the school and inside the classroom. The professional benefits of working in a collegial environment were surely a contributing factor for their positive feelings about partnership within the broader context of the school.

Residents' positive feelings for partnership in the Professional Engagement domain were found to have grown even stronger in the first half of second placement. The data suggested that the residents' second mentor teacher continued to play an indispensable and constructive role in their learning process. The experience of learning alongside a different mentor teacher, and having access to a different teaching style, further provided residents with the opportunity to gain insights into strategies and approaches for addressing issues of teaching and student learning.

During the second half of school placement 2, professional learning in the Professional Engagement domain dominated residents' positive feelings. This shift from partnerships to professional learning seems to indicate that residents had become less dependent on their mentor teachers or other staff in the school by the later stage of the second placement. The data show some residents felt more capable of performing as an individual teacher, who could make appropriate and evidence-informed decisions based on their own professional knowledge. While it is commonly held that the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for optimal teaching cannot be developed fully in a pre-service education program (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Loughran et al., 2013), the residents' considerable positive accounts of their professional growth indicate that they had developed the underlying professional characteristics associated with beginning teaching as defined by the WACOT Professional Standards for graduate teachers.

As for resident's negative feelings, during the first placement these were prominently associated with professional learning and professional responsibility in the Professional Engagement domain, and planning and assessing in the Professional Practice domain. The data reveal residents felt their professional learning was impeded both at the personal level and the program level. At the personal level, some residents felt discouraged when their previously held personal values and beliefs collided with the real-life practices, which was a shock for some residents. Additionally, at the program level, the data indicated that some residents' found they were given conflicting information by the university and the school placement, which caused them to feel confused and lost. They were further confused by discrepancies they found between the university course work contents and placement teaching practice. This was especially confronting for them when the assigned university tasks did not fit in with the ongoing class curriculum in the placement school.

In addition, the overall workload was a problem for some, and not being able to cope was the most frequent negative comment raised by the residents. This suggests that to a degree the residency program lacked alignment between the university demands and the requirements of the school placement. The need for a strong and supportive partnership between the university and school experience has been stressed by Loughran et al. (2013) and Darling-Hammond (2014).

Residents' negative feelings in the first half of school placement 2 were in relation to the Professional Practice domain. When the residents were placed in the new school at the start of their second placement, they faced an unfamiliar cohort of students and there were greater expectations on them to perform. They were also under pressure to prepare for the five-week teaching sequence for the final block practicum. Yet, unlike school placement 1 there was little time for them to get to know and bond with their students. Consequently, their critical lack of student knowledge caused them to feel less certain about their work in the classroom. The marked difference between the residents' response about the learning environment at these two times suggests more time was needed in the second placement school to better equip the residents with knowledge about the students they were about to teach. The results also suggest that initial teacher education programs need to take into consideration the impact of the changes in context that occurs when there is a change in the school placement.

In the domain of Professional Engagement, residents' negative feelings were associated with professional responsibilities and the intensive work-load. Data also revealed residents appeared to struggle with their second mentor teacher, who in some instances may have been less welcoming and supportive than mentor teachers in the first placement. Although the mentor teacher is a very influential agent in the resident's learning process, data in this study suggest they can also have negative and depressing effects, which have the potential to hinder residents' development.

By the later stage of school placement 2, residents' negative feelings were primarily associated with planning and assessing in the Professional Practice domain and partnership in the Professional Engagement domain. Whereas residents were developing their capacity to plan and assess learning, these aspects of teaching were also identified as areas of concern. Thus, while the challenge of the final placement was a catalyst for professional growth, some of the residents appeared to need more support to prevent them from becoming overloaded and demotivated.

Residents commenced the TRP program with pre-existing views of their professional responsibilities and roles as a teacher. The domain of Professional Engagement was strongly impacted by their experience in the TRP. It appeared that the complex and demanding nature of teaching exceeded the expectations of the residents. At the commencement of their teacher education program pre-service

teachers have tended to hold idealistic and optimistic images of themselves as prospective teachers. According to John Furlong and Trisha Maynard (1995, p. 76), when pre-service teachers start their school experiences, “their idealism appear(s) to rapidly to fade in the face of realities of the classroom, and they become obsessed with their own personal survival”.

However, in this study despite this initial stage of being personally and professionally challenged, the residents soon began to focus on how to survive. They learned about the students and began to understand their needs and started to develop some management strategies. In this residency program the flow of learning was disrupted or challenged somewhat when the residents moved to their second placement school. The second school challenged them to adjust to new classrooms, school and community in terms of ethos, culture, demands and constraints. This experience served as catalyst for residents to critically reflect on their knowledge and skills, and re-examine their abilities and dispositions, and as a teacher within the profession.

In the latter part of the second school placement, professional learning and professional responsibilities were two areas in the domain Professional Engagement that were impacted the most. The intensity of the final block practicum reinforced to the Residents the demanding nature of teaching, and the complex, bewildering and painful process of learning to teach (McIntyre et al., 1993).

7.2.1.2 Perceptions of professional identity

Residents entered the TRP with preconceptions of the roles and responsibilities of being a teacher, and a vision of the kind of teacher they would be. Their own educational experiences and their long-held societal and cultural views of the teaching profession gave rise to these prior understandings, which in turn affected the perceptions of their professional identity before they embarked on their teacher preparation. Residents’ personal attributes, therefore, impacted on how they initially perceived their professional identity.

Residents with maturity and considerable teaching and life experience showed higher levels of confidence upon entering the TRP. They also demonstrated a set of established values and beliefs about teaching and learning. These residents had a clearer vision about the type of teacher they wanted to be. They were more

able to project an affirming and positive self-image about their teaching at the commencement of the program. Furthermore, their perceptions of teaching identity were found to be quickly refined as they progressed through the first school placement and came to the realisation that they had been somewhat optimistic about teaching. This trend is consistent with other research studies, for example, Cattley (2007) found that professional identity formation developed as pre-service teachers gained a thorough understanding of the diverse roles and responsibilities of a teacher.

Residents with limited or no teaching experience did not feel confident at the beginning of the program. Any optimism they held of their teaching identity at this stage appeared to be overshadowed by their initial concerns about the many unknown aspects of teaching. However, these residents gradually developed confidence during the first school placement and most overcame their preliminary concerns. By the time they finished their first block practicum, these residents appeared to have developed a sense of self-assurance about teaching and felt more positive about how they saw themselves as a teacher.

The second placement provided opportunities for the residents to readjust their perceptions about their ability to teach. As mentioned several times, residents' encountered a disorienting experience and their confidence decreased as a result of the need to readjust their teaching to the new context. Classroom management emerged again as an issue and differences in mentor teacher expectations also caused the residents to re-examine the assumptions, and skills and strategies they had developed in their first placement. This challenged their sense of professional identity. However, over time, and with encouragement to engage in vigorous reflection and articulation of their beliefs and values, most of the residents were able to reassemble and build further their professional identity. Some, however, found the overall experience challenging.

The development of the resident's confidence about teaching in the TRP revealed two different patterns. The first pattern, comprising by a number of residents, commenced with a period of diminished confidence that was followed by a period of recovery of confidence. These residents concluded the TRP with a positive self-image for teaching. However, a second aggregation of residents did not demonstrate the period of recovery of confidence. This group completed the TRP

with a low level of confidence. This appeared to be caused by these residents' being overwhelmed and challenged in the final block placement, where they were required to demonstrate the complete repertoire for independent full-time teaching. However, these residents' also appear to have achieved a more realistic understanding of the breadth and complexity of teaching, which caused them to doubt their own capacity to be a teacher. This, in turn, impacted negatively on their perceptions of their professional identity.

Overall, residents showed more confidence in their capacity to teach at the end of the first block placement than they did at the end of the second block placement. This appears to be due to both the change in school context and the little time they had to re-establish rapport with students. For example, the residents experienced two days a week for seven weeks in the first school before undertaking the first block placement in school term 2. However, the assessed final block placement in the second and relatively new school context did not have same gradual build-up because this occurred as soon as term 4 began.

These changes in the way the residents viewed themselves as a teacher and their confidence in their capacity to teach correspond with previous research findings. Pillen, Den Brok, and Beijaard (2013) concluded the formation of professional identity was an ongoing process, and influenced by both personal and professional experience.

Residents' confidence in lesson planning grew through the first placement and was the strongest when they reached the first half of school placement 2. This coincided with the time they were preparing for their five-week program for the final block practicum. At the end of the TRP the majority of the residents felt positive about their competency in lesson planning, suggesting this had continued to improve during the final block placement. With regard to the skills needed to assess student learning, the residents indicated they were weak at the commencement of the TRP, but their assessment skills improved steadily throughout the program and were strongest upon completion of the program. The patterns shown residents' lesson planning and assessment suggest that the development of competency in these two areas occurred over a relatively long period. It would seem that the development of residents' professional identity, and their belief in their capacity to plan and assess teaching, required constant support throughout their program.

Changes in residents' perceptions about their capability to manage and respond to classroom issues followed a different pattern. In this case the majority of the residents reported low confidence on their entry to the TRP. Resident confidence was highest at the end of the first school placement, and remained at this level until the end of the program. This suggests that the second placement experience had limited impact on resident's confidence in their classroom management skills. As indicated previously, the second placement was dominated by the residents' negative feelings about the changed placement and their decreased confidence in their capacity to meet new expectations. These factors, along with the limited time they had to get to know their students, and to respond to the higher expectations of their mentor teacher, placed them under considerable pressure.

The difficulties experienced by the residents suggest they needed to be better supported at certain critical times in TRP. And perhaps they needed more opportunities to be engaged in a collegially and professionally supportive environment, where they could feel safe and motivated to talk about their new experiences and dilemmas. This view is consistent with the conclusions drawn by Connelly & Clandinin, (1999, p. 101), who found that professional teacher identities were "communally sustained as people supported one another through confirmation of their beliefs, values and action and as they share stories and recollections". In this study the researcher believes that during school placement 1 more effort could have been made to help residents cultivate a set of internalised conceptions about how to manage classrooms. Residents needed to be guided to see the underlying significance of classroom practices and make sense of their learning experiences. They needed insights and examples to work from to help them handle similar situations in the future. Teacher educators need to structure activities that are specifically designed to enhance Resident's capacity to reflect on their developing perspectives about how to create and manage effective learning environments. Walkington (2005) noted that teacher educators should avoid the risk of equipping pre-service teachers with practical hints and tips for the classroom, and states that pre-service teachers need opportunities in an authentic environment to challenge their existing beliefs. For example,

Without the opportunity to challenge personal philosophies and existing practices, pre-service teachers merely perpetuate the behaviour and beliefs of supervising teachers. The potential result

is a teacher who know(s) how to 'fit in' to an existing context, but lacks the skills and confidence to make decision that will make a difference (2005, p. 63).

Walkington's comments are particularly relevant to the problem of those residents who were unable to build their confidence and reinforce their self-image as a teacher through the two school placements. This problem of having to adjust from one to the other indicates the deeply contextualised nature of teaching and classroom management. The capacity to fit into another teachers' classroom may be the attribute of a confident or competent teacher, but an unrealistic expectation in such a brief time period.

The findings of this study raise questions about how teacher educators might address the tension that residents faced in their quest to become a competent teacher and forge an acceptable professional teacher-identity. Beijaard et al. (2004, p. 115) suggested that "professional identity formation is often presented as a struggle because (student) teachers have to make sense of varying and sometimes competing perspectives, expectations, and roles that they have to confront and adapt to". In the present study Emma's conflict with her mentor teacher's use of money for rewarding good student behaviour is a case in point. This experience left Emma feeling frustrated and lost despite her maturity and previous teaching experience. Situations such as these are difficult for residents to manage and learn from. Emma's experience suggests that residents should be helped to be more aware of potential difficulties and tensions. It also suggests that they should be more actively supported in dealing with these professional tensions.

In summary, residents' professional experience during the TRP was intense but for some not a long enough process for fostering a strong self-image for teaching. This self-image was forged through negotiating past personal experiences and prior beliefs about teaching, by gradually accommodating newly-gained knowledge, skills and values. It was developed and refined through practice that was bound by particular contexts in which the residents' taught. The developing self-image of teaching was readily challenged when the context for teaching changed, and it was contingent on the support and judgements of residents' mentor teachers. On the other hand, the skills of teaching, such as lesson planning and assessment of

student learning, showed a progressive development and, once established they were less challenged by the change in teaching context.

The fragility of the developing self-concept for teaching appears to reflect the degree of resilience an individual has for adapting to new situations. For example, Swann (1992) found that self-concept was very resistant to change, even when faced with contradictory facts. Korthagen (2013) claimed that it was extremely difficult to change the way student teachers thought about themselves, particularly if they had a negative self-concept. In this study the researcher found that residents who had negative perceptions of themselves at the early stage of the TRP experienced significant improvement in terms of how they saw themselves as teachers. Nevertheless, it was quite clear that the change did not eventuate in a straightforward and instant manner; it was rather complex and slow. For these residents negative learning experiences appeared to act as a catalyst for a change in self-concept. When this occurred their self-doubts and negative feelings were replaced slowly with self-assurance and self-recognition. In some instance the then more positive disposition was further reinforced by praise from others within their collegial community. However, these new feelings of self-assurance were fragile and vulnerable to the next negative experience. Thus fluctuations in residents' self-concept were intricately linked to the immediate context of learning. This echoes the finding of Slegers and Kelchtermans (cited in (Korthagen, 2013), who asserted that teachers' identity was the result of temporary meaning related to themselves and to the teaching profession, which they derived from interacting within the teaching environment.

7.2.1.3 Summary

In the forgoing sections, the researcher has discussed residents' perceptions regarding the four dimensions of their professional learning, and their professional identity. The concerns and learning focuses identified here were similar to the findings of previous researchers of initial teacher development. To generalise, it would seem there are elements of learning that must be mastered by all pre-service teachers irrespective of the course of study. The progression of the residents' learning stages in this study also resonated with Guillaumae and Rudney's (1993) finding, which confirmed that this learning was a complex and erratic evolvement. It also corresponded with Furlong and Maynard's (1995) finding that "development

from ‘novice’ to ‘professional educator’ is dependent on the interaction between individual students, their education program and the school context in which they undertake their practical experiences” (p. 70). The current study confirms that despite its more intensified and integrated in-school learning experience, the TRP contained trends of pre-service learning that corresponded with what has occurred in conventional programs.

7.2.2 Research question two: residents’ perceptions in terms of transformative learning experiences

Research question two sought evidence of the occurrence of transformation in residents’ learning experience during the TRP. To this end, data from the two surveys about residents’ perception of learning incidents, and data regarding resident’s perspective change, drawn from the open-end questions in survey 2 and interview questions, were examined in Chapter Five. In addition two case studies were displayed in Chapter Five to illustrate the transformation of residents’ thinking about learning and teaching. To address the research question about transformational learning, the findings outlined in Chapter Five will be now discussed and contrasted with the tenets of Mezirow’s transformative learning theory.

7.2.2.1 *Precursor steps to transformative learning*

The survey data showed that residents’ overall perception about their learning experiences was reflective of various stages that are referred to in the literature as precursor steps to transformative learning. Residents had clearly experienced an array of ‘learning incidents’ that were related to the disorienting dilemma, critical reflection, rational discourse, and action stages of Mezirow’s elaborated learning process. These learning incidents served as the initial evidence of the possible occurrence of transformative learning addressed in research question two.

Mezirow’s (1978) study of 83 women returning to college formed the basis of his 10-stage theory of transformative learning. He argued that not all the steps were required, yet the greater the number of these precursor steps in the learning process, the greater possibility of perspectives being transformed. Following his theory formulations much research has been done on the relevance of these steps to the transformation of learners’ perspectives, with several researchers supporting his argument (Baumgartner, 2002; Brock, 2010; E. W. Taylor, 1997). For example, based on a quantitative study of 256 undergraduate business students, Brock (2010)

presented supportive evidence for Mezirow's claim that the more precursor steps taken by learner the greater the likelihood of them experiencing transformative learning. Brock made a further claim that the most important precursor steps were disorienting dilemma, critical reflection, and trying on new roles. She also stated that each of the 10 precursor steps that Mezirow (1978) hypothesized played a part in creating a conducive environment for transformative learning to occur. Brock (2010) relied on specific measurements to determine whether her participants experienced transformative learning. In this study the researcher explored the precursor steps or stages first, then made inductive judgment about whether transformative learning had occurred.

The survey data discussed above provided the first layer of evidence for the possible occurrence of transformative learning. However, it should be noted this interpretation was based on collective self-reported evidence about whether and how individual residents had experienced transformative elements of learning during TRP. To address the second research question further, the researcher discusses below residents' changed perceptions about their teaching.

7.2.2.2 Informative learning versus transformative learning

The results yielded by the analysis of interview responses in Chapter Five showed significant changes had occurred in residents' understandings about the nature of teaching, students, classroom management and the teaching profession. While some of the changes resembled informative learning, which involves an elaboration of existing frames of reference, or learning new frames of reference, others reflected a transformation of points of view or habits of mind about teaching.

According to Kegan (2008), informative learning involves bringing new content into the existing knowing, which may comprise additions to the knowledge base or repertoire of skills, or extending pre-established and existing perspectives or frames of reference. Several changes that were identified in Chapter Five fell within this category, reflecting residents' understanding about the scope and depth of teaching in general; their knowledge of students and how to handle students' behaviours in the classroom; and their interpretation of being part of the teaching profession. These changes were classified as informative because they all occurred within residents' existing frames of reference. Thus, the TRP provided for the informative growth and development of the residents' professional attributes needed

for teaching, as defined by the WACOT Professional Standards for graduating teachers.

Transformative learning was evident from the analysis of interview data reporting changes in residents' perceptions about learning and teaching. For example, some residents experienced transformation of perspectives about the nature of teaching, dealing with problematic behaviours, and the individual differences of students. One resident went through a significant transformation of self that was focused on her confidence in teaching. These reported learning experiences indicated that transformations were related primarily to residents' point of view or habit of mind.

Unlike informative learning, transformative learning experiences completely replace pre-established points of view or perceptions with ones that seem more professionally tenable. Such learning experiences involved residents transforming their taken-for-granted assumptions, perceptions or frames of reference to make them more open, and inclusive, and discriminating (Mezirow, 2000a). Compared with informative learning experiences, transformative learning experiences were fewer; however, their implication was more significant, indicating that the TRP had provided learning opportunities for residents to question their habit of mind about the expectations they had for classroom experiences in teaching. The transformative learning was more prolonged, more critical, and more profound, enabling them to develop new perspectives and more justified guidelines for their actions and decision-making in teaching.

According to constructivist theory, people make meaning through their interactive experiences and build new ways of seeing the world around them. As adult learners, residents came to the TRP with diverse life experiences, and an established way of interpreting what teaching was like. The accompanying values, beliefs, and assumptions influenced the behaviours they exhibited in their teaching practice. Many of these behavioural attributes were uncritically assimilated perceptions that were developed from their past schooling experiences and absorbed from social and cultural interpretation about teaching. This established set of expectations acted as a filter for understanding their experience in the TRP. However, residents were prompted to question these assumptions and expectations when they were interrupted by unexpected circumstances or incidents. During the

TRP, residents were continuously immersed in a real teaching context and, as such, this authentic learning environment became the catalyst for residents' critical examination of their previously held perceptions to accommodate conflicts between their preconceptions and the realities of teaching. These processes gave rise to their transformative learning experiences, which Mezirow (1997) proclaims as the goal of adult education. That is, this process should "help the individual become more an autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his or her own values, meanings, and purpose rather than uncritically acting on those of others" (p. 10). The TRP, as a program for preparing adult learners to teach, appeared to have provided fertile soil for transformative learning.

Nevertheless it needs to be said that informative learning and transformative learning experiences represented two different dimensions of learning and both were important to the professional development of the residents. This view was expressed by Kegan (2008) who stated that "both kinds of learning are expansive and valuable, one within a pre-existing frame of mind and the other reconstructing the very frame" (p.42).

7.2.2.3 *Stages of transformative learning*

Arguably, the two case studies evidenced Mezirow's (1995) three overarching stages of transformative learning, namely critical reflection, discourse, and action following a trigger event or disorienting dilemma. Emma, for example, transformed her perspectives about rewarding student behaviour after experiencing the clash between the mentor teachers' use of money as an extrinsic rewards system in the classroom and her inner personal values. This dilemma was the starting point and subject matter for her transformative learning, which triggered critical reflection, causing her to question the integrity of her mentor teacher's practice of using money to encourage good behaviour. Through rational discourse took the form of communicating with the site director, shared understandings were arrived at and it was deemed acceptable for Emma to develop a different system for rewarding students. Emma and the mentor teacher both agreed that even though intrinsic reward was more favourable, it was necessary to use extrinsic reward when the students were more receptive to extrinsic rewards. Thus discourse became by which the medium for Emma's critical reflection could be put into action, where her

experiences was reflected upon and assumptions were questioned, and where her meaning structure was ultimately transformed.

The four stages proposed in the study, as presented in Chapter Three, seemed to fit with both Jack and Emma's identified transformative learning experiences. However, that the data indicated that they did not go through all the steps in each stage predicated in Mezirow's paradigm of perspective transformation. This finding is congruent with Cranton's (1994) argument that learners do not necessarily complete one step and then move on to the next in a linear fashion; in other words there are hazy distinctions between the stages. The findings also correspond with Cranton's (1994) claim that it is possible for the learners to move back and forth between stages or to experience more than one stage simultaneously. The evidence from Emma and Jack's transformative learning experiences also showed that the process occurred over a long period of time and that its progress did not follow a linear or hierarchical sequence. In this sense, it is more appropriate to conceive of "stage" as a period of time in a potentially transformative learning process, as suggested by Cranton (1994). The concept of "a period of time" instead of "stage" is particularly pertinent in making sense of the residents' learning to teach context within the TRP. The data show that the majority of the identified transformative learning processes evolved over the period of the two school placements and that some of the steps involved recursive processes. And disorienting dilemmas were found at different periods during the residents' transformative learning process.

In comparing the process of residents transformative learning with the findings of other researchers (Cranton, 1992; Keane, 1987; J. A. Taylor, 1989; M. Taylor, 1987), the researcher noticed these consistent elements: a disorienting event or situation, reflection and exploration, revision of assumptions, and a phase of reintegration, reorientation, or equilibrium. Each of these is now elaborated briefly.

Disorienting dilemma

The stimulating events or disorienting dilemmas in this study, were similar to what J. A. Taylor (1989) described as "incidents or experiences that disturb the individual's current view of reality they are experienced as anomalies, curiosities, contradictions or disorienting dilemmas; they are experiences or events which demand attention and cause the individual to stop and think" (p. 227). The

disorienting experiences came in variant forms. These included a pivotal event, or a series of gradually cumulating events, or a natural developmental process. Regardless of their forms, these events were catalysts for transformative learning as they prompted the residents to engage in a process of critical self-examination. This caused them to rigorously reassess their preconceptions, assumptions, beliefs and tacit habits of mind. The stimulating events were also important starting points for transformative learning as it was during this step that the residents initiated the process of what J. A. Taylor (1989) described as internal and external dialogue, which “guides the process of transformative learning and the process of reflection that is intimately connected to and expressed through dialogue” (p. 227). It was unsettling for the residents because they were conflicted with their prior conceptions, and they encountered challenges that they could not resolve through their existing frame of reference. This forced the residents to challenge their established way of seeing and thinking about teaching. These disorienting dilemmas were found to be professionally enabling as they allowed the residents to eliminate misconceptions and potentially transform their frame of reference.

The most identifiable disorienting dilemmas were found in the initial stages of the program, when the residents found gaps between what they envisioned teaching to be and teaching in reality. Conceptually, this type of disorienting dilemma resembled “reality shock” or “culture shock” (Veenman 1984

, p.143) experienced by beginning teachers. From the residents’ point of view, the disorienting dilemma penetrated many aspects of their understanding about teaching, including the complexities involved in teaching; organisational skills required for planning; implementing lesson plans and assessing student learning outcomes, and coping with the workload of teaching. However, as mentioned above, residents’ disorienting dilemmas were not confined to the initial stage of learning to teach; they occurred at other stages of the TRP and were linked to many aspects and contexts of learning to teach.

Critical reflection

Mezirow (1991) was insistent that for transformative learning to take place, the process of critical reflection must be evident learners must critically examine

their taken-for-granted beliefs, and develop a frame of reference that is more inclusive of diverse understandings, perceptions and even realities (King, 2003).

Emma and Jack's case studies both reveal that they went through a period of critical reflection to question the integrity of their prior assumptions and beliefs (E. W. Taylor, 1998). For example, Emma engaged in a lengthy process of critical reflection about her pedagogical belief on collaborative learning. Throughout the course, Emma continuously examined her tacit beliefs, and values and built a new understanding about pedagogy from her experiences in the program. This long period of critical self-reflection led to a transformative learning experience as she continued to interact with her newly-learned understandings and worked to act upon it. Whereas some residents were found to totally reject their new learning, Emma appeared to assiduously negotiate and integrate her newly acquired concepts of teaching with her previous ideas (Cranton, 1994), demonstrating a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently changed the way she taught. Interestingly, from the outset of this study Emma categorised herself as a reflective learner. In his meta-analysis, E. W. Taylor (1997) noted "some learners have a greater disposition toward transformation—a change of a frame of reference—than others do in the classroom"(p.10). This disposition might be an area for further study.

Rational discourse

Mezirow (1997) stated "discourse is necessary to validate what and how one understands, or to arrive at a best judgment regarding a belief" (p. 10). In this study most residents recounted how dialogue with university academics, peers, mentor teachers and site directors in the placement schools provided them with opportunities for rational discourse. The case study data demonstrated that Emma's and Jack's dialogue with their supervising mentors were particularly valuable.

Action

Acting upon a transformed perspective consummates the process of transformative learning. According to Brookfield (1987), if the learner has decided on the accuracy and the validity of new ways of thinking, she/he begins to find ways to integrate these into her/his life. Cranton (1994) stated that evidence of integration

could be externalised as visible actions, or it could be entirely internal. In this study, the residents' ways of integration differed between individuals.

7.2.2.4 Uniqueness of transformative process of learning to teach

Since residents came to the TRP with divergent backgrounds and prior knowledge about teaching, it would be unrealistic to expect the TRP to prepare residents to all be at the same level of academic achievement upon completion of the course. The TRP provided residents with learning opportunities and a set of common goals for becoming a teacher. And each resident was engaged in the same mode of study. However, residents' experiences of the residency approach to learn were various and unique.

The transformative learning experiences identified in this study were characterised by a learning process that was multidimensional, spiral and recursive. This finding is consistent with the view expressed by King (2003), who claimed transformative learning should be envisioned as “an ascending spiral of experiences and understanding as learners progressively experience, reflect, and understand new perspective of their experiences and themselves” (p. 86). Teaching is considered to be a complex undertaking, hence learning to teach is by nature a multi-dimensional process. During the TRP, residents were exposed to a wide range of learning activities through an immersion in the real context of teaching. Residents were therefore prompted to challenge their prior beliefs in many different ways, such as about their ideas about students, the curriculum, classroom management, lesson planning, assessment and so forth. The process was by no means linear or rigid, rather it was a dynamic and lengthy developmental process, with multidimensional learning unfolding in an almost a parallel manner. This finding supports the ideas of Cranton (2002) that, “transformative learning is not a linear process, yet there is some progress to it, perhaps spiral-like” (p. 1). Non-linear learning evident from both case studies, Emma's case in particular, demonstrates the occurrence of multiple transformations, with overlaps in timing. Over the course of the TRP these transformations permitted the residents to reach a more discriminating way of understanding teaching.

In addition to the multidimensional, spiralling and recursive nature of transformative learning the study also demonstrated that the dimensions of transformation were individually focused. Residents are adult learners and bring

unique backgrounds to their learning. As a cohort they represent a diverse pool of personal attributes, and visions for teaching. The TRP provided many different learning opportunities, which was also framed to provide a relatively consistent model for professional learning.

In summary, informative and transformative were evident in residents' perceptions across all aspects of their learning to teach and these changes were substantiated largely within the three learning domains of Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, and Professional Engagement. The process of transforming perceptions and perspectives about teaching and learning was multidimensional, individualistic and contextually dependent.

7.2.3 Research question three: residents' perceptions of the TRP

Research question 3 was focused on identifying elements of the TRP that were perceived by residents to have contributed to or hindered' their professional development. Numerous data relevant to residents' perceptions of the TRP were analysed and the corresponding results were presented in Chapter Six. The findings shed light on residents' perceptions about the TRP in different ways. These findings will now be synthesised and briefly discussed in three strands: 1) what contributed to residents' growth as teachers (evidence of supportive influence); 2) what posed as both challenges and hindrance to their professional development (evidence of variance); and 3) what hindered their learning (evidence of hindering influence). The relationship amongst these three strands is illustrated in Figure 7.1 and the key elements belonging to each strand are identified.

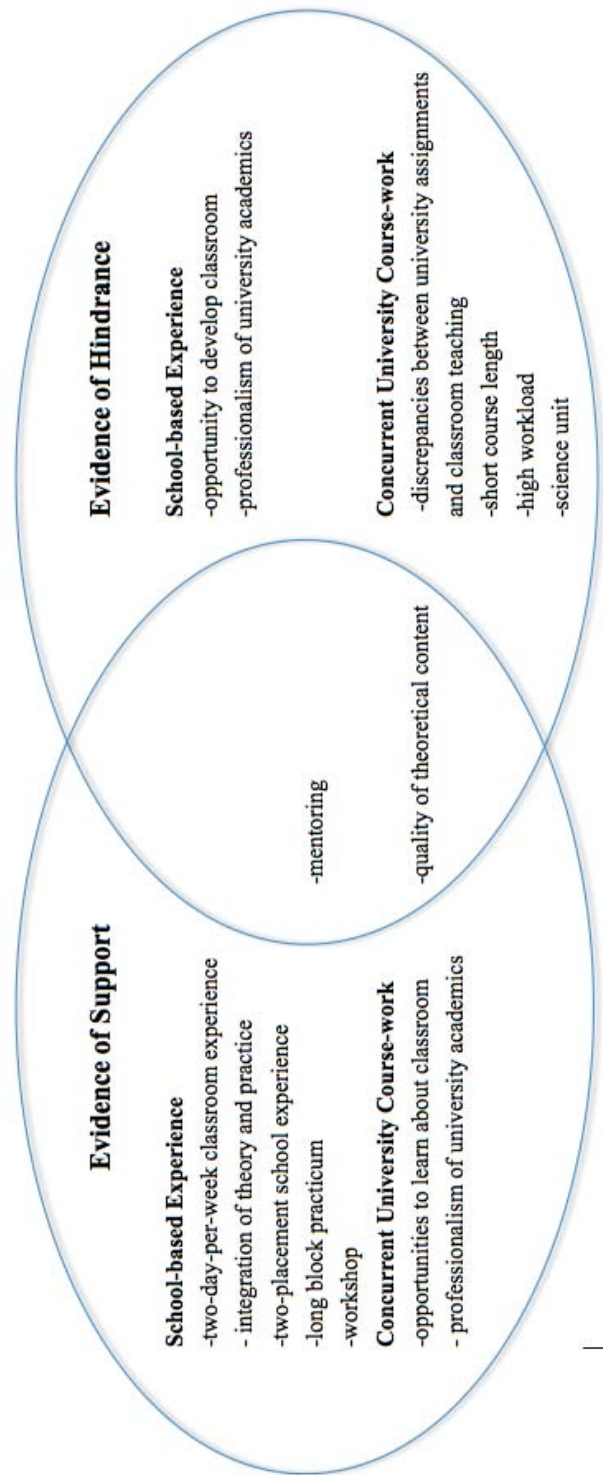


Figure 7.1: Residents' perception of the TRP

Paring university course work with extended periods of school placement or ‘clinical’ experiences was one of the key features in the design of the TRP. As demonstrated by Figure 7.1, both of the components were indispensable to residents’ professional development. In terms of supportive influence, from each of the components there were some that the residents’ found particularly beneficial for their growth. Hindering influence was most strongly linked to the concurrent course work component. Residents were concerned more about this than the school-based counterpart of the TRP. Residents’ perceptions about mentoring and the quality of theoretical content varied considerably. In the following subsections, elements outlined in each strand are briefly discussed and summarised to address their impact on the preparation of pre-service teachers in the TRP.

7.2.3.1 Evidence of support

School placement experiences worldwide have been reported as a critical component of teacher education courses. For example, beginning teachers have consistently rated their school-based professional experiences as the most useful part of their teacher education courses in Australia (Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007; Townsend & Bates, 2007). In this study this emphasis was bound to be even more pronounced, and there is no doubt that professional experience made the biggest contributions to the residents’ professional development. Four outstanding features of the school-based component were the ongoing two-day per week continuous classroom experiences, the two long assessed block practicums for each semester, the opportunity to learn alongside an experienced mentor teacher, and the opportunity to have two different placement schools.

The two-day per week placement was perceived by the residents to be the most positive element of the school-based component of the TRP. Interestingly, this feature the two-day per week school placement was the main factor that influenced residents to apply for study in the TRP, and their high rating of TRP was predominately due to their continuous immersion in the classroom environment. This continuity in classroom experience gave the residents time to observe interactions between their learning and their teaching over lengthy periods and to draw some conclusions about how their work impacted on students.

As indicated at the outset of this thesis, school-based professional experiences over extended periods is not new. Many worldwide reform endeavours for initial teacher education have placed great weight on the strengthening of school-university partnerships. These endeavours had been focused largely on increasing the duration and intensity of the professional experience component ("Early Teacher Education-Trends in Initial Teacher Education ", 2013). The favourable impact that lengthy placements have on the professional learning of pre-service teachers was also well documented in relevant research. Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) stated that extended student teaching experience, particularly when it was concurrent with theoretical course work, was associated with more positive results for teaching preparation. Pre-service teachers with these experiences were more able to apply their learning to practice. Ure (2009) conceded that "lengthy placements scheduled concurrently with on-campus classes, prior to a block placement, appear to provide the best environment to link the theory and practice components of the teacher education program" (p.35).

But of particular significance in the TRP investigated in this thesis was the placement at the commencement of the school year. This enabled the residents to see how the beginning of the school year unfolded and gave them time to get to know the students and establish rapport. In addition, the two-day per week in each placement allowed better preparation of residents for the full-time assessment block practicum that occurred later. Residents were able to get to know the students and the classroom dynamics prior to taking on this full-time teaching role.

Furthermore, the concurrent course work and placement in the TRP provided residents with an integrated learning environment. This enabled the residents to develop a conceptual framework for organising and understanding the theories that were addressed in their course work. The evidence indicated that this enhanced residents' school-based professional experience during the TRP. This is consistent with Darling-Hammond's conclusion of improved effectiveness of measures of teaching for candidates who have more and earlier clinical experiences (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005, p.398). These features appear to address the recent Australian Federal Government's call for providing professional experience (practicum) in their initial teacher education course as early as possible in order to help pre-service teachers build confidence in managing classrooms and to be able to

cater for diverse student learning needs (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group-Australian Government Response, 2015). It was further proposed by the Advisory Group that early commencement would help expose pre-service teachers to a wider variety of experiences and provide them with an opportunity to determine sooner if they were suitable for the teaching profession.

In this study another feature of the TRP was the opportunity to have two placements in different schools providing residents' with sustained experience with two different mentor teachers and two very different classes of students and school contexts.

It should be noted that although the residents acknowledged the benefits of having variety in their two placement experiences, this arrangement was not without issues. One of findings of this study was a drop in the confidence of residents in the second placement, following a confident first placement. Most residents were troubled by having to deal with new and unexpected problems in their second placement. The researcher has asserted that at certain junctures more needs to be done at this time to help the residents achieve a smoother transition in the second placement. This may entail a more gradual introduction to teaching in the new classroom to provide the residents with time to get to know the students and the curriculum they are to teach. Also, perhaps more targeted professional support from both the school and university could be provided to assist residents at this time so that they are able to continue to build on their initial experience of teaching. Perhaps in the program as implemented, not enough account has been taken of the later stage in the year, in which the second placement occurred residents are 'coming in from the cold' of not having worked with students or teachers in building the established culture.

The most important component of the placement experience in each of the two schools was reported as being the final block placement. This was supported by the collective results of residents' positive learning experiences, as reported in Chapter Four and the survey data about the importance of different program elements in Chapter Six. Residents indicated that both assessed block practicums provided them with the conditions they needed to experience the whole cycle of teaching. They valued the opportunity to be responsible fully for lesson planning, classroom teaching, and assessing student learning outcomes and reporting on

student achievements. Although the residents were somewhat pressured and stressed by the fact that their performance in these placements formed the main assessment of their teaching, they valued the opportunity to experience fully the realities of day-to-day teaching. This experience had a strong impact on their personal and professional learning.

This feature of the TRP is therefore highly commended and is consistent with the comment made by Ure (2009) that “continuous exposure to the school and on-campus program prior to the block placement provides a more satisfactory learning experiences and a smoother transition into the teaching component of the placement” (p.31). Nevertheless, the work required for this immensely intensive five-week period of full-time teaching was a significant challenge for the residents. They experienced fluctuations of high and low emotions about their teaching during these periods.

The researcher suggests that one aspect of the block placement period that needed to be addressed was the conflicting demand between the university course work and the block teaching requirements. In short, this conflict could have been eliminated by removing the additional course work requirements to provide the residents with the benefit of taking control over the block teaching period and being assessed on their capacity to manage this. The requirement to submit other work for academic assessment seemed superfluous at this time.

However, the residents valued the concurrent university course work component, and reported that the university academics were supportive in assisting the residents to develop professionally. The residents felt the university academics were up to date with theories and best practices for teaching and they appreciated the dedication shown by academics and the lengths taken to ensure the residents had adequate theoretical knowledge to frame and develop their teaching practice in schools.

7.2.3.2 Evidence of variance

Overall, the quality of the theoretical content of the university component was judged as satisfactory by the residents. In particular, the residents valued the classroom management sessions they had in their university component, which

helped them to develop deep understandings of student behaviour, and acquire useful tools and strategies for managing classrooms in the Residency placement.

However, some criticisms of the course content were also evident. In particular, the residents complained that there was a lack of depth in theoretical learning in the core subject areas of literacy and maths. A number of residents felt they were not adequately prepared for teaching literacy. While this area was covered extensively in course work units and residents were required to read widely on literacy, they did not feel that they had the time to cover all elements needed. They felt compromised in their capacity to provide for literacy instruction across the ages and stages of the primary school curriculum. This issue of the balance of the breadth and the depth of knowledge for teaching appears to need further consideration.

Weaknesses in the links between the school-based teaching experiences and the theoretical component of teacher education programs have been raised in the *Top of the class* report on initial teacher education in Australia. The Report claimed that this is “ a result of limited communication between university and school, with school often having little input into the content, time and structure of practicum. The expectation of the universities are often poorly articulated to the school (Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007, p. 71). The current study suggests that the TRP had not fully realised the benefits of a clinical approach to pre-service teacher education, as there remained some discrepancies between the university and school components of the program. The study suggests there was scope for a higher level of coherence between theoretical and practical components, and that the links between them could be made more explicit.

Residents also reported that there were variations in terms of the impact of mentoring on their professional learning experience. Overall, the residents’ reported that the opportunity to learn alongside an experienced mentor teacher had contributed considerably to their professional growth. This finding is consistent with other empirical researches, which found that effective mentoring was pivotal to the professional and personal development of student teachers (Caires & Almeida, 2007; Kosnik & Beck, 2009). Mentors were facilitators, promoters, guides, and the source of emotional support for student teachers during placements. The interpersonal element of the supervision process was regarded as being central to the quality of student teachers’ field or practicum experiences in school. The residents benefited

tremendously from their mentor teachers in this study. Both surveys demonstrated that the mentors were the most important source of support for the residents. One benefit of note was mentor teachers' effective modelling of classroom management practices. This was identified as a major area of learning and residents wanted to learn about this right from the commencement of the TRP.

However, despite the prevailing evidence about the value of the work of the mentor teachers found in this study, there was considerable variability among them. Some mentors did not provide helpful models for the residents to emulate. Residents who were fresh graduates with very limited teaching background appeared to be very dependent on mentor modelling for their development. These residents felt unsupported when their mentor failed to provide them with good modelling. At a deeper psychological level, it was possible that this group of residents had endorsed an apprenticeship model for their professional learning. In other words they positioned the mentor as an expert to be copied and regarded themselves as the novice, who should follow.

These findings suggest that more attention needed to be given to the goals of the mentor program and the selection of the mentor teachers. For example, a more thorough screening could help to ensure that mentor teachers have the necessary attributes needed to be a pre-service teacher supervisor. In addition, mentor teachers need to be engaged in a professional development learning program to ensure they adopt a more consistent approach with the residents. This study supports the conclusions of the recent ministerial report: *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers*, which suggested there was a lack of quality assurance and a lack of structured training for teachers taking supervising roles in ITE programs in Australia (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Committee, 2014). The report called for improved cooperation between schools and universities to provide improved preparation of supervising/mentor teachers. Gardiner (2011) concluded that if extended placements are to be an effective intervention for improving teacher preparation, there should be professional support to maximise the benefits of mentoring and to assist with negotiating the complexities of collaboration.

Some of the tensions that occurred between the residents and mentor teachers in the TRP were discouraging for the residents. One of these tensions resulted from the commonly held "apprentice" concept of mentoring. In these cases mentor teacher

functioned as an authoritative figure, because of which the residents to feel a lack of ownership of their class. This in turn, made them feel unable to perform to their best in the class. Another source of tension was the result of a communication breakdown between residents and their mentor teachers. As Bradbury and Koballa Jr (2008) argued, the nature of the communication between the mentors and novices was an indispensable component of mentoring relationships. The current study has shown that ineffective communication resulted in ineffective mentoring and that this, in turn, hindered the professional development of the residents. More general barriers to mentor-pre-service teacher communication included a lack of time for discussions with the residents about their teaching practices.

In summary the variant evidence presented in this discussion implies that teacher educators need to develop strategies for selecting and training mentors who are able to provide strong support for the residents. It is important that from the outset of the mentoring relationship that both members of this dyad are able to articulate their views about the nature of the relationship and the roles of each member. Strategies are also needed to help the mentor-mentee develop and maintain good communication skills throughout their time together in the residency placement. The study demonstrates that even though policies and practices for communication and mentoring were stipulated, more work needs to be done improve the quality of mentor support in the TRP.

7.2.3.3 Evidence of hinderance

The issues that have been discussed so far indicate that the attitudes of the resident cohort towards the TRP was predominantly positive. Evidence shows that the (relatively) short course length and the high academic work-load were perceived as a main hindrance to their learning. Even though this may sound like two issues, they are in essence intertwined. The residents felt “there were just too many things to do in too little time”.

It should be noted that the amount of time that residents spent in schools was high, compared with the general requirements of teacher education programs in Australia. The residents spent a total of 54 days in the two-day per week placement and two lots of 25 days in each of the five-week block practicums. This is a total of 104 days, which contrasts with the minimum requirement of 45 days that were specified for a 1 year Graduate Diploma of Education at the time this study was

conducted. It also contrasts with the current national minimum requirements of 60 days in school for a two-year postgraduate program, such as a Master of Teaching. In considering the associated academic requirements, and the pressures residents reported that they felt during the TRP, there is probably scope for a review of what should constitute the optimum time and pattern for engagement in the school placement component of a residency-type program. There is also a need to review the overall workload expected of the residents. Based on the evidence gathered in this study, there needs to be a better alignment between university assignments and classroom teaching requirements. Redundancy between requirements for classroom teaching and university assignments needs to be addressed.

7.3 A Summary of the Collective Story: What was it Like to Learn in the Teacher Residency Program (TRP)?

Although there is a growing body of empirical evidence about the outcomes of different teacher education approaches, there is no consensus as to what makes the most effective teacher education program. Researchers such as Darling-Hammond (2006) have argued the need for teacher education program models that develop deep and sophisticated knowledge that transfers to practice. She argued that this is best achieved through interweaving course work and school placement experiences. The design of the TRP was intended to provide this quality of integration.

The findings of this study have indicated that this TRP design has only partially addressed the theory-practice divide in ITE. The researcher has examined the residents' learning in the TRP from three different angles: a description of the actual professional learning experiences that the residents had in the program, an examination of the impact of these learning experiences on the Resident's views of teaching, and an appraisal of whether the different programmatic elements fitted in the professional development of pre-service teacher.

In terms of residents' professional learning experiences, the evidence has shown emphatically that residents made substantial achievement in all the three professional domains of teaching. Their professional learning manifested attainments across learning areas that are consistent with the professional standards of teaching. These included growth in their knowledge about students, the curriculum, and how to adapt curriculum requirements to the learning needs of students. They developed a

deep understanding of student behaviours and the capability required to maintain a supportive classroom environment to fulfil teaching goals. In addition, the residents' learned to develop lesson plans for teaching across a range of different discipline areas of the primary curriculum. They planned individual lessons and the task designed to assess learning outcomes. Most importantly, they demonstrated their ability to sustain classroom activities for full blocks of time, as a full-fledged teacher. However, this is not to say that everyone who completed the TRP was prepared fully for teaching. In reality, some graduates of this program felt they were far from ready for teaching, doubting they had the necessary repertoire of knowledge and skills to run their own classroom independently.

In addition to achievement in professional learning domains, the residency program provided an experience for the residents in which they could develop and refine their professional identity as a teacher. The resident's identity formation process involved the negotiation of their individual preconceptions of teaching with the new experiences presented to them in the program. Displaying different trajectories of learning and professional identity development, the residents each went through a complex and idiosyncratic developmental process of learning to teach. This process was strongly influenced by the interplay between the individual's attributes as an adult learner, the learning opportunities provided by the TRP, and the school context in which they had their placement experience.

Evidence from this study has shown, that the core features of the TRP provided appropriate learning opportunities that prompted the residents to examine their pre-established assumptions and concepts about teaching and learning. This has apparently negated the apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1976), that has been strongly identified as a problem with many initial teacher education programs.

As for residents' transformative process, the researcher has shown that not all of the learning processes that occurred during the TRP were transformative. Transformative learning only occurred when the residents examined, questioned, validated and revised their perspectives. Residents who held to existing belief systems or perspectives to make sense of their experiences did not evidence transformative learning.

During the TRP, the residents were able to benefit from an array of positive elements provided by the university concurrent course work and school-based placement components, which contributed to their professional development as teachers. Yet at the same time, they were exposed to challenges created by less desirable aspects of the course, which posed a threat to their professional growth. Whereas the TRP had considerable strengths for learning to teach, it was not devoid of problems. Of course, individual's interpretation and learning in the program varied according to individuals' differences, and readiness to take advantage of what the program offered, and personal resilience to deal with hindrances – all of which influenced the outcomes for residents' learning experience during the TRP.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Introduction

In this study the researcher examined the learning experiences of 25 pre-service teachers who were enrolled in the primary stream of a one-year graduate initial teacher education program in a Western Australian university. The researcher employed a concurrent nested study design to provide an in-depth exploration of the learning experiences of 12 of the pre-service teachers.

Data were collected through the semi-structured interviews of these 12 residents and surveys of the 25 to address three relatively independent research questions. Through the lens of transformative learning theory, this study conducted two case studies of the potential of the residency approach to teacher education to transform pre-service teachers' perspectives of teaching.

In this chapter the researcher presents answers to each research question and implications for the education of pre-service teachers. Limitations of the current study are also discussed and recommendations for further research are presented.

8.2 Research results

8.2.1 Research question one

What perceptions do pre-service teachers have about their professional learning experiences over the course of the TRP?

This question has been addressed through two related foci. The first theme looked at the residents' perception of their professional learning, including their sense of achievement, the positive and negative experiences they encountered, and the impact of these experiences on their view of teaching. The second explored the residents' development of professional identity, as judged by their self-image as a teacher, their feelings about belonging to the two school communities, and their confidence in teaching. In the discussion in Chapter Seven the researcher reviewed these foci, related elements, and implications about the residents' perceptions of their professional learning in the TRP. Overall the residents' perception of their professional learning was characterised as one of continuous growth. The data

confirmed that the TRP provided a professionally oriented study of teaching that provided time and opportunity for cumulative learning from both course work and practical teaching.

The characteristic patterns of learning that occurred during this year-long program are now summarised for each of the four data collection points. The pattern of achievements identified by the residents indicates that during the first semester their learning commenced with a period of 'shock' that resulted from being immersed in the classroom and the consequent challenges to their personal preconceptions about teaching. This was followed by a period of growth in applying professional knowledge growth. By the second semester the residents' initial concerns about 'becoming a teacher' had lessened, enabling the residents to increase their focus on student learning. Toward the end of the first residency experience the residents' professional growth was more exclusively focused on the development and use of their professional knowledge for teaching.

At the second data collection point, which occurred at the end of the first five-week block practicum in school placement one, the residents expressed shock and surprise about their experience of teaching at the beginning of school placement one. At this stage their perceived initial learning achievements were focused on building the skills they needed to understand the students they were teaching and to manage behaviour. Issues of planning effective lessons, and how to create classroom environments conducive to productive teaching were also prominent in their identified achievements. The first half of the TRP was therefore identified as a stage where the residents' professional development was largely related to the views they held about teaching and the skills they needed to survive in the classroom. Residents' learning was focused on responding to the reactions they had to their teaching experience and to the complexity of managing classrooms. Their early experiences challenged the perceptions they held about teaching and of themselves in the role of a teacher.

At the third point of data collection, in the first half of the second placement, the residents' perceived learning achievements were focused on developments in the Professional Knowledge and Professional Practice domains and to a lesser extent in Professional Engagement. Identified achievements in Professional Knowledge were related to the curriculum, and how to transpose curriculum goals into their classroom

teaching. Residents strove to adapt their teaching to suit the academic needs of students, to cater for diversity of student learning. Perceived achievements in Professional Practice reflected improvements in classroom management. Perceptions related to Professional Engagement reflected improvement of ability to reflect on and critically evaluate the development of their professional growth.

During the first half of the second placement, the residents had apparently developed more sophisticated knowledge and skills for teaching and displayed sensitivity to the learning needs of students.

At the fourth data collection point, in the second half of school placement two, residents' perceived achievements in the Professional knowledge domain showed greater depth. At this stage the residents felt they had accomplished a higher level of integration between their knowledge of students and the curriculum. Consequently they believed they were more able to balance the diverse needs of students with the requirements of the curriculum. The residents were taking full responsibility for teaching and also gaining greater control over classroom management along with improved skills in lesson planning and assessing student learning outcomes. This stage, therefore, was associated with perceived improvements in both knowledge and practice of teaching.

The data on residents' perceptions of their positive learning experiences in the TRP emphasised the value they placed on having continuous school placement. Their positive experiences were most linked strongly to the domains of Professional Engagement and Professional Practice. In the domain of Professional Engagement positive experiences were strongly linked to the professional partnership they had with their mentor teachers and other stakeholders. In the domain of Professional Practice, positive experiences were most strongly related to developments in teaching practice. The latter stage of the program, which preceded the final assessed block practicum was more challenging for the residents and coincided with a major period of professional learning in the Professional Engagement domain.

Residents' perceived negative learning experiences were focused primarily on Professional Engagement and the profound sense of professional responsibility they felt in relating to students and managing their behaviour. As they moved into their second placement, residents' negative experiences were related to their

management of the learning environment. This appeared to be caused by a change in placement school and the need to form a new relationship with a second mentor teacher, and to respond to a new teaching context. Some of the negative feelings were apparently also caused by resident's anxiety about the final assessment of their teaching that was to occur at the end of the second placement. Thus, toward the end of the TRP the residents indicated that planning, assessing student progress and the issue of quality of mentoring were for them primary sources of negative feelings.

Residents' sense of their professional responsibilities as teachers was reported to change markedly as they moved from their initial idealistic optimism to a more realistic and objective judgment about the complex and demanding nature of teaching. Residents felt their learning experiences also impacted on their own views about their professional learning and competence as a teacher. In particular their perceived learning was focused on mastery of student behaviour management, curriculum development, and adapting their teaching to address the individual needs of students. They felt that they were also positively engaged in becoming a member of their school communities and the broader teaching profession.

Residents' perceptions of the development of their professional identity demonstrated that this occurred as an ongoing learning process throughout the TRP. These identified learning processes indicated that:

- Residents' initial perception of their professional identity was largely influenced by preconceived ideas about the role of teachers and their vision of what kind of teacher they would be. As they became more engaged in the practice of teaching, they simultaneously reevaluated their identity as a teacher.
- The majority of the residents reported a strong sense of belonging to their two placement school communities, and their attachment to the teaching profession intensified as they learned to respond to student needs.
- Residents' confidence levels were influenced by both their personal traits and the contextual factors, such as the school placement. Most residents perceived considerable growth in their overall confidence; however, their initial perceptions of their teaching identity were overshadowed by the

initial concerns they had about teaching and managing classrooms. It was only after they had time to reflect on their values and their actual experiences in classrooms that they began to gain a sense of self-assurance and a more affirmative perception of their teacher identity.

8.2.2 Research question two

Do pre-service teachers' perceptions provide evidence of a transformative learning experience in the TRP?

The interview, survey and case-study data demonstrated that transformative learning had occurred in residents' overall professional learning experience during the TRP.

Residents' perception of learning was characterised by the identified precursor steps to transformative learning. This first layer of evidence, drawn from the results of the survey data, demonstrated that residents' learning occurred in a manner that was consistent with the tenets of transformative learning theory. The identified precursor steps took the form of an initial disorienting dilemma, followed by critical reflection, rational discourse and action.

Residents' perceptions about teaching and learning drawn from interview data changed over the course of the TRP. This serves as a second layer of evidence of the occurrence of transformative learning. These interview data demonstrated that residents' perceptions about the *nature of teaching, students, classroom management and the teaching profession* underwent significant changes. These changes were believed to be substantiated within the three learning domains of *Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, and Professional Engagement* and exemplified two types of learning processes. These being: *informative learning*, where an existing frame of reference was elaborated, or a new frame of reference was acquired, and *transformative learning*, where taken-for-granted assumptions or frames of reference were transformed into perspectives that were more open, inclusive and discriminating.

Transformative learning was found to have occurred when the residents examined their prior conceptions about teaching in response to being exposed to alternative perspectives. Transformative learning took place when the residents examined, questioned, validated and revised their established perspectives.

Residents' prior perspectives about teaching were found to exist in the form of distortions, prejudices, stereotypes, and unquestioned assumptions. Residents developed and reconstructed meanings from their experiences and validated the meaning of these experiences through their ongoing interactions with students, and communications with mentor teachers, site directors, and university academics.

The third layer of evidence was derived from the two case studies, which provided individualised accounts of learning trajectories during the TRP and further confirmed that transformative learning occurred. This evidence also demonstrates that the TRP provided a conducive learning environment for residents to be engaged in a transformative learning process. While transformative learning didn't occur for all of the residents, it appeared that it had a profound impact on residents' professional growth as a teacher when it did. The case-study data demonstrated that:

- Disorienting dilemmas emerged either from pivotal events or a series of gradually cumulating events. They were unsettling and were the catalyst for transformative learning as they acted like a trigger to stimulate the residents to engage in critical self-examination of the preconceptions and assumptions that were in conflict with their new experience.
- The process of critical reflection was realised as the residents rigorously weighed their problematic beliefs and assumptions to assess their validity, and to examine the underlying premises against the new evidence of understanding that emerged from the rational discourse they had within themselves and with others.
- When new perspectives were acted upon in the form of informing teaching practices the transformation process was completed.

Thus, the data from this study indicates that the experiences of the residents' learning were consistent with the common stages of perspective transformation described in the research literature. The residents' experiences demonstrate that each identified transformation was unique and that this was relevant to the interaction between personal factors, the learning context and the complex demands of learning to teach. The transformative learning process appeared to be multidimensional, spiral and recursive. Many prior beliefs about teaching appeared to be challenged and transformed in a progressively circular, non-linear movement.

8.2.3 Research question three

What elements of the Teacher Residency Program support or hinder the professional learning of pre-service teachers?

This question was addressed by both the interview and survey data sources. The most important supportive learning elements of the TRP were found to be:

- *The opportunities provided for residents to integrate theoretical and practical components of teaching*

TRP's clinical approach to the preparation of pre-service teachers helped to address the much-criticised separation of learning in the placement from the learning in the academic component of initial teacher education programs. Residents' positive perceptions of professional learning experience during the TRP largely contributed to the well-integrated concurrent university course work with extended clinical school placement. The combination of these components allowed the residents to develop deep understandings of the realities of day-to-day teaching in a school. It also made it possible for the residents to be engaged from the outset in the development of integrated learning experiences. The integration of the two, helped to ensure that pedagogical theory is simultaneously taught, absorbed, and put into practice.

- *The two-day per week school placement*

This was perhaps the most valued element of the TRP. The extensive classroom experience through residents' continuous immersion in the real context of teaching was regarded as being paramount in influencing the development of their depth of knowledge about students and how to design and adapt curriculum to meet their needs. Continuous exposure to the classroom was seminal in helping the residents develop practical skills for teaching and to be a responsible and self-reflective teaching practitioner. In particular the early exposure to the two-day per week school placement also enhanced the quality of residents' learning experience.

- *Block Practicum*

The block practicums, with the requirement for full-time teaching at the end of both semesters was recognised as a supportive element in facilitating

residents' professional development. These extensions of the two-day per week clinical experience provided a focal point for the residents to plan and sustain their work in the classroom. They also helped them to gauge their own professional growth as they integrated, how they worked with students, how they managed the curriculum, and how they related to other teachers.

- *Two school placements;*

While the residents were challenged by the move to a second school mid-way through the year, the two placements were perceived to be significantly supportive of their professional learning. The variety of experiences undertaken in the two placement schools broadened residents' professional perspectives, but also help to build up their confidence as a prospective teacher. The differences experienced influenced all elements of residents professional learning because they learned more about the differences between schools, curriculum, student needs and teachers.

Other positive features, included workshops provided to the TRP cohort, and the opportunity to be in a cohort in the placement schools. In general, the TRP was regarded as a well-design program that provided a quality professional learning experience for pre-service teachers.

Elements of the course that the residents identified as being a hindrance to their professional development included: the quantity and quality of the university course work; the discrepancies that the residents experienced between what they studied about teaching and what they experienced in schools; differences between mentor teachers, and the length of the course.

With regard to the quantity and quality of course work, the residents found that they were time poor in the program overall. Perhaps the university needed to develop a more carefully integrated program that schedule the time requirements to permit the residents to have the time they needed to attend to each of the theoretical and practical demands of the TRP. The residents were also concerned with what they perceived as a lack of depth in the theoretical study of the discipline areas for literacy and maths teaching. This resulted in the some residents feeling under-prepared for classroom teaching in these two areas.

The quality of mentoring during the TRP also attracted criticism from some residents. These criticisms were largely related to unsuccessful experiences with particular teachers in school. Some residents were paired with a mentor teacher who didn't have the skills residents felt they need to support or scaffold their learning. In these cases the residents were not able to benefit fully from their practical experience of teaching. Other residents found they were hampered by a break-down in communication and a lack of autonomy over their work in the classroom.

The findings of this study suggest the overall length of the course was too short. The residents consistently struggled with the workload in this one-year program and they were very vocal about the stresses they experienced. They were convinced a one-year program was inadequate and believed that a further six months was required. They believed that this amount of additional time would enable them to attend adequately to the academic content of the program. Additional time would also help ease the level of pressure they experienced.

8.3 Implications

This study has provided insights into the experience of learning to teach for a particular cohort in a graduate-entry residency based program. The data indicated patterns of development and other factors related to learning, perceptions about teaching, and the experiences of the residents that have some implications for pre-service teacher education programs more generally.

The findings about resident's professional learning experiences bring to light the importance of maintaining programmatic coherence of teacher education programs for creating meaningful and beneficial learning experiences for pre-service teachers. The teacher residency program in this study encompassed many characteristics of past and existing successful teaching education programs. However, the residents found there were inconsistencies between the expectations for the concurrent university course work and the school placement components. Thus the study demonstrated the importance of ensuring integration of theory and practice of teaching and learning and clearer stipulation of the learning expectations at all stages of the program. Closer cooperation through the university-school partnership is required. While the concept of a residency program suggests there will be good cooperation between the university and participating schools, this study indicated

that programmatic coherence will not be achieved unless all participants have a common understanding of what is expected and what needs to be achieved. The study demonstrated that there are elements of learning that are individualistic. However it also demonstrates there are common patterns of development for residents. It is suggested that closer integration of what is required in the course work and what occurs in schools during all stages of the school placement might be more carefully integrated.

Another core area of concern was the lack of consistency in the practice of mentor teachers in schools. While it is accepted that differences in experiences of pre-service teachers are inevitably linked to differences in school communities, it also needs to be recognised that the residents have particular learning needs. The different learning expectations of mentor teachers therefore need to be addressed. *Designers of initial teacher education courses should provide guidelines for mentor teachers to help build a more consistent program of support for residents.*

Pre-service teacher learning should be central to the university-school partnership. This study highlights the learning problems that are created for residents when the university and school partnership is implemented at a fairly superficial level, with the members of each organisation taking responsibility for only their component of the program. To realise the full potential of a clinical approach to teacher preparation, *deeper and closer cooperation between the partners is required. There should be more communication between the university academics and the teachers involved in the school placement. They should have common expectations and they should be responsive to the individual learning needs of the pre-service teachers.*

The researcher found pronounced individual difference between the residents during the year-long program. While some of this reflected the differences in the school experience component, it was also evident that much of difference could be attributed to the residents themselves. Nevertheless, this study showed some residents had experiences that were consistent with the precursor steps of transformative learning. In particular, the two case studies demonstrated that both residents had experienced a transformation of perspective about various aspects of their teaching and learning during the course of the program. However, there was insufficient evidence for a generalisation about the universality of transformative

learning on the part of the residents. While each of the case study participant's in-depth testimonials demonstrated the benefit of transformative learning process in helping them to acquire new perspectives and responses to learning and teaching this process was not evident for all residents. Thus not all learning to teach is transformative, much of it can be described as being informative. It is also apparent that the nature of the transformative learning tends to be specific to the individual. In this sense the challenge they experience is related to the preconceptions of teaching they have on entry to the program. *Therefore these differences highlight the need for teacher educators to be more aware of the nature of learning being experienced by pre-service teachers. More tailored efforts should be made to help the teaching candidates to capitalise on the conducive learning environment offered by a teacher residency program.* For some candidates the experience requires them to achieve a profound transformation of meaning perspectives. For others the learning appears to focus more directly on information and skill development through informative learning. Thus, *teacher educators should understand that for some candidates learning to understand the professional challenges of teaching is inextricably linked to understanding the self and the perspectives this brings into the classroom. Efforts should be made to provide opportunities for the residents to challenge their unconsciously assimilated prior conceptions of teaching, and through critical reflections and rational dialogue realise shifts of teaching perspectives.*

While transformative learning, as a theoretical framework, is still a 'work in progress' under development the findings of this study indicate that it can be applied to initial teacher education. This theoretical framework demonstrated there were differences in the learning experiences of the residents. Some residents found their preconceptions about teaching and their values and approaches were challenged by the residency experience. It seemed that it was necessary for them to reconceptualise their mind set about teaching before they were able to engage fully in the learning that was available to them through the continuous classroom experiences provided in the residency.

It was apparent that experience in the school placement at the beginning of the program was a trigger for much early reflection by the residents. *This suggests that teacher educators need to implement strategies to identify pre-service teachers who are particularly challenged at this early stage. It also further highlights the*

importance of the quality of communication between mentor teachers, university academic staff and the pre-service teacher/residents and the expectations of the program overall. It would be likely to be helpful, for instance, for residents to understand what is implied and involved when they are engaged in a transformative learning process. Similarly it would be helpful if teacher educators and school mentors could articulate these processes with residents so they are able to feel supported in this learning.

Finally, more information about the roles that teacher educators and mentor teachers might play in supporting and communicating with residents could inform future research into the development of pre-service teachers and how transformative learning is relevant to the complex and dynamic process of learning to teach. Similarly, more theorising is needed to define what informative learning needs to occur and how this is best supported.

8.4 Limitations

The use of both survey and semi-structured interviewing provided the researcher with an opportunity to triangulate the data. However, little can be done in the way of generalising the findings to other teacher education programs, because the selection processes, curriculum, assessment and support of the residents were specific to this program. Also, whereas Mezirow's theoretical model is focused on the cognitive and rational processes of transformative learning, little consideration has been given to the impact of extra-rational factors such as imagination, emotions, and intuition on the learning process, in the context of adult education. Thus the transformative elements of residents' learning experience described here may not present the full meaning of what they experienced.

In this study the researcher had focussed on a cohort of pre-service teachers preparing to become primary teachers in a graduate-entry diploma of education program. Moreover, the study was confined to a one-year program of initial teacher education and did not follow the participants into their first teaching posts to assess their preparedness for teaching. All results should be interpreted in the light that the data gathered were based on the residents' self-reported perceptions. Thus, all data originated from the residents themselves. Any conclusions, therefore, about the

longer term impact of these perceptions on the residents' overall professional development is necessarily tentative and speculative.

8.5 Recommendations for Future Research

This study tapped into residents' perceptions about aspects of their lived learning experiences. It has been noted that these opinions or perceptions were not in themselves facts. For this reason some reservation remains about the accuracy and reliability of the collected evidence in determining the real impact of teacher residency on the preparation of pre-service teachers. For further research, the use of more objective and measurable variables are recommended. This could include a study of the residents' teaching performance subsequent to the TRP, as more needs to be known about the consequences of their preparation. Data sources from stakeholders, including mentor teachers, university academics and other school staff in placement schools could also be gathered to improve the triangulation of perspectives on residents' learning, and to allow the juxtaposition of the different perspectives.

When residents' experiences were examined in relation to transformative learning, the research relied on interviewing to gain access to the meaning perspective of the pre-service teacher. The reliability may have been comprised, because may not have articulated their understanding and intentions correctly, presenting what they thought the researcher wanted to hear rather than what they truly believed. Future researcher could include other sources to gauge residents meaning perspectives or beliefs, for example, a reflective learning journal, concept maps, metaphor analysis, critical incidents and others.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Stage 1 Resident Interview

Name	Student #	Mobile#	Email:
Notes			

This interview is part of a PhD research project, *A Study of Transformative Learning in a Pre-service Teacher Residency Program*, which aims to examine the impact of Edith Cowan University's Teacher Residency Program (TRP) on the initial professional learning experience of graduate pre-service teachers. As you have kindly agreed to participate in this project, this will be the first of 4 interviews that you will undertake during the course of your study. The purpose of this interview is to gather evidence about your understanding of aspects of teaching and learning about teaching upon entering the TRP. We believe your perspectives will help us learn more about the education of pre-service teachers for today's schools. The interview should only take half an hour to complete. Thank you for being part of this project; your participation is greatly appreciated.

1. What motivated you to join ECU's Teacher Residency Program?
2. Have you had any previous teaching experience? If yes, where and how long?
3. What do you expect to learn from ECU's Teacher Residency Program?
4. How do you describe yourself as a prospective teacher?
5. How well do you think you will be able to teach and help students learn?
6. How do you perceive the teaching profession?
7. How do you perceive the role of teacher in helping students to learn?
8. How do you perceive the roles of the university academic staff and school Mentors in helping you learn to teach?
9. What do you know about the Professional Standards for Teachers?
10. What do you think you need to learn about students?
11. How ready do you think you feel now to plan for teaching and to create learning environment in classrooms, to assess student achievement, and to give feedback?
12. How do you think you will learn to teach?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix B: Stage 2 Resident Interview

Name	Student #	Mobile#	Email:
Notes			

This interview is part of a PhD research project, *A Study of Transformative Learning in a Pre-service Teacher Residency Program*, which aims to examine the impact of Edith Cowan University's Teacher Residency Program (TRP) on the initial professional learning experience of graduate pre-service teachers. This is the second interview that you will undertake as a participant of this research project. The purpose of this interview is to gather evidence about your professional learning experience you've gained from the TRP so far. The interview should take 30 minutes to complete. Thank you again for being part of this project; your participation is greatly appreciated.

1. What is the most important thing you have learned about being a teacher since the beginning of the TRP?
2. What positive learning experiences have you had during this period?
3. What negative learning experiences have you had during this period?
4. Thinking about these past experiences, how have they impacted on your views of teaching?
5. How do you think about yourself as a teacher now?
6. How confident do you feel in your teaching now?
7. What do you need to learn about students at this stage in your course and why?
8. How confident do you feel in following guidelines of the curriculum to plan for teaching, handling whole class teaching, and using assessment to assist your teaching now?
9. Do you have a sense of belonging to the school community now?
10. Do you have a sense of belonging to the teaching profession now?
11. Thinking back over your learning to teach so far, have you had times when you were struggling with your ideas or values about teaching?
12. What did you do about those experiences?
13. How did you feel about those experiences?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix C: Stage 3 Resident Interview

Name	Student #	Mobile#	Email:
Notes			

This interview is part of a PhD research project, *A Study of Transformative Learning in a Pre-service Teacher Residency Program*, which aims to examine the impact of Edith Cowan University's Teacher Residency Program (TRP) on the initial professional learning experience of graduate pre-service teachers. This is the third interview that you will undertake as a participant of this research project. The purpose of this interview is to gather more evidence about your professional learning experience you've gained from the TRP. The interview should take 30 minutes to complete. Thank you again for being part of this project; your participation is greatly appreciated.

1. Are there any new things you have learned about being a teacher since you begin your second placement?
2. What further positive learning experiences have you had during this period?
Have you had any further negative learning experiences this time? *How do you cope with these situations?*
3. How have these recent experiences changed your views of teaching?
4. How do you think about yourself as a teacher now?
What new have you learned about yourself as a teacher? Are there any changes to what you told me in our last interview?
5. How confident are in your teaching now?
Has your confidence level increased or decreased since our last interview?
Have you learned new knowledge and skill for it? How?
6. Having started your second placement, what more do you need to learn about students?
7. How confident are you in:
 - a) following guidelines of the curriculum to plan for teaching;
 - b) handling whole class teaching;
 - c) and using assessment to assist your teaching now?

What improvements have you noticed in yourself? Do you try new ways to do these tasks?

8. Even though this is a new school for you, do you have a sense of belonging to the school and to the teaching profession?
9. Have any of your values, beliefs or expectation about teaching and learning changed?

If not, please briefly describe why there haven't been any changes?

- a. What triggered them?
 - b. What did you do about those changes?
 - c. How did you feel about those changes?
10. To what extent do these changes affect how you teach?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix D: Stage 4 Resident Interview

Name	Student #	Mobile#	Email:
Notes			

This interview is part of a PhD research project, *A Study of Transformative Learning in a Pre-service Teacher Residency Program*, which aims to examine the impact of Edith Cowan University's Teacher Residency Program (TRP) on the initial professional learning experience of graduate pre-service teachers. This is the last interview that you will undertake as a participant of this research project. The purpose of this interview is to gather more evidence about your professional learning experience you've gained from the TRP. The interview should take 45 minutes to complete. Thank you again for being part of this project; your participation is greatly appreciated.

1. What new things did you learn about teaching during your 5-week block placement
2. What further positive learning experiences have you had since our last interview? What negative learning experiences have you had?
3. How have these recent experience changed your views of teaching?
4. Thinking back to the beginning of the program, to what extent do you think your views of teaching have changed? *i.e. Has your view about you and your teaching changed as a result of the program? Please elaborate.*
5. How do you think about yourself as a teacher now?
6. What new things have you learned that have added to your understanding of students since our last discussion?
7. How confident are you in:
 - a) following guidelines of the curriculum to plan for teaching;
 - b) handling whole class teaching;
 - c) and using assessment to assist your future teaching?
8. Do you feel ready to take responsibility for your own class as a regular teacher? Why or why not?
9. Have any of your values, beliefs or expectations about teaching and learning had changed after your Bloack placement?

- a) what triggered them?*
- b) What did you do about those changes?*
- c) How did you feel about those changes?*

10. To what extent did these changes affect how you taught during your Bloack placement? Please elaborate.

In what ways? Did you integrate new perspectives into your teaching?

- 11.** Will these changes inform your teaching in the future?
- 12.** Did the TRP match your expectation about learning to teach?
- 13.** What do you think about the quality of the professional learning experience that you have had in the TRP overall? Why?
- 14.** Is there anything you think need to change in the TRP to improve your experience of learning to teach?
- 15.** Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experience of learning to teach?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix E: Survey of Professional Learning Experience 1

Edith Cowan University



Survey of Professional Learning Experience

Part 1: Demographic data

Please answer the following questions by putting a ✓ in the appropriate box and filling in necessary information.

1. How old are you? 20-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51+ ☐
2. Which gender are you? Male ☐ Female ☐
3. Have you had any teaching experience before? (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Yes, as teaching assistant or relief teacher.
 - ☐ Yes, as private tutor.
 - ☐ Yes, as swimming instructor.
 - ☐ Yes, as volunteer in an organization.
 - ☐ Yes, others _____ (Please specify).
 - ☐ No.
4. At the commencement of the program, were you a recent (1-2 years ago) graduate?
 - ☐ Yes, I've just graduated in _____ (Year) with a _____ (degree) in _____ (Discipline).
 - ☐ No, I have/ had worked as _____ for _____ years.
5. At the commencement of the program, were you a career changer?
 - ☐ Yes, I have /had been working as _____ for _____ years, and I am seeking for a career change.
 - ☐ No, _____ (Please specify).

Part 2: Professional Learning Experience

- A. How important are the following people to your professional learning experience in the Teacher Residency Program? Please indicate by putting a ✓ in the appropriate box.

	Not at all important	Low level of importance	Moderate level of importance	Very high level of importance
1. The students				
2. Your Mentor Teacher				
3. Your Site Director				
4. University academic staff				
5. Other Residents				
6. Other staff in the placement school				
7. Families and friends				

Please make some comments here if there are other people who are important to your professional learning experience.

- B. How important are the following factors for your professional learning experience in the Teacher Residency Program? Please indicate by putting a ✓ in the appropriate box.

	Not at all important	Low level of importance	Moderate level of importance	Very high level of importance
1. Classroom observation				
2. University Intensive in the first two weeks				
3. Weekly meeting with Mentor Teacher				
4. Three-way meeting with Mentor Teacher and Site Director				
5. Four-week assessed block practicum				
6. Two-day per week residency in placement school				
7. One-day-a-week concurrent course work in university				
8. The first semester placement being wholly in one school				
9. The second semester placement being in a different school				
10. Opportunity to work with a Mentor Teacher				
11. Spontaneous feedback from Mentor Teacher				
12. Feedback from university academic staff				
13. Belonging to a cohort in university classes				

	Not at all important	Low level of importance	Moderate level of importance	Very high level of importance
14. Belonging to a residency cohort in placement school				
15. Placement starting at the beginning of the year				
16. Your critical reflections on teaching				
Please make some comments here if there are other factors that are important for your professional learning experience.				

- C. Think about your professional learning experience so far, how often does your experience in the Teacher Residency Program reflect the following? Please indicate by putting a ✓ in the appropriate box for each statement.

	Never	Seldom	Often	Very often
1. I have an experience that causes me to question the way I teach.				
2. I have an experience that causes me to question my ideas about teaching.				
3. I find my beliefs and expectations about teaching are challenged.				
4. I find that my peer's beliefs and expectations about teaching are also challenged.				
5. I find my practice varies from my beliefs about teaching.				
6. I feel uncomfortable with ideas I had about teaching after I started the Teacher Residency Program.				
7. I try out new ideas so that I would become more confident in teaching.				
8. I adopt new approaches to teaching.				
9. I change my practice based on feedback.				
10. I think over the decisions I have made in my teaching.				

Please make some comments here if you have further thoughts about beliefs, expectation and challenges you are experiencing while learning to teach.

Thank you for completing this survey!

Appendix F: Survey of Professional Learning Experience 2

Edith Cowan University



Survey of Professional Learning Experience

Thank you for participating in the Teacher Residency Research project this year. This final survey seeks your view about your professional learning experience throughout the program. Please complete each of the survey questions. In part 1, there is a comment box at the end of each of the three sections for you to add further comments should you wish. In part 2 please give your comments on three open-ended questions.

Part 1: Professional Learning Experience

D. How important have the following people been to your professional learning experience in the Teacher Residency Program? Please indicate by putting a ✓ in the appropriate box.

	Not at all important	Low level of importance	Moderate level of importance	Very high level of importance
8. The students				
9. Your Mentor Teacher				
10. Your Site Director				
11. University academic staff				
12. Other Residents				
13. Other staff in the placement school				
14. Families and friends				
Please add any further comments you wish to make about the impact of various people on your professional learning experience.				

E. How important were the following factors for your professional learning experience in the Teacher Residency Program? Please indicate by putting a ✓ in the appropriate box.

	Not at all important	Low level of importance	Moderate level of importance	Very high level of importance
17. Classroom observation				
18. University Intensive in the first two weeks				
19. Weekly meeting with Mentor Teacher				
20. Three-way meeting with Mentor Teacher and Site Director				
21. Four-week assessed block practicum in Semester 1				
22. Five-week block Professional practice in Semester 2				
23. Two-day per week residency in placement school				
24. One-day-a-week concurrent course work in university				
25. Workshops in school				
26. The first semester placement being wholly in one school				
27. The second semester placement being in a different school				
28. Opportunity to work with a Mentor Teacher				
29. Spontaneous feedback from Mentor Teacher				
30. Feedback from university academic staff				
31. Belonging to a cohort in university classes				
32. Belonging to a residency cohort in placement school				
33. Placement starting at the beginning of the year				
34. Your critical reflections on teaching				

Please add any further comments you wish to make about the various factors that were important for your professional learning experience.

- F. In terms of your professional learning experience in the Teacher Residency Program how often did your experiences reflect the following? Please indicate by putting a ✓ in the appropriate box for each statement.

	Never	Seldom	Often	Very often
11. I had experiences that caused me to question the way I teach.				
12. I had experiences that caused me to question my ideas about teaching.				
13. I found that my beliefs and expectations about teaching were challenged.				
14. I found that my peer's beliefs and expectations about teaching were also challenged.				
15. I found my practice was inconsistent with the beliefs held about teaching.				
16. The ideas I had about teaching were challenged by the Teacher Residency Program.				
17. I found I could try out new ideas with my teaching and I felt confident with my teaching.				
18. I adopted new approaches to teaching.				
19. I changed my practice based on feedback.				
20. I took time to think over the decisions I made in my teaching.				

Please make further comments here you wish to make about your beliefs, expectation and the challenges you experienced while learning to teach.

Part 2: Open-ended Questions

Please comment on the following questions.

16. Thinking back to the beginning of the program, to what extent do you think your views of teaching have changed? *i.e. has your view about you and your teaching changed as a result of the program? Please elaborate.*

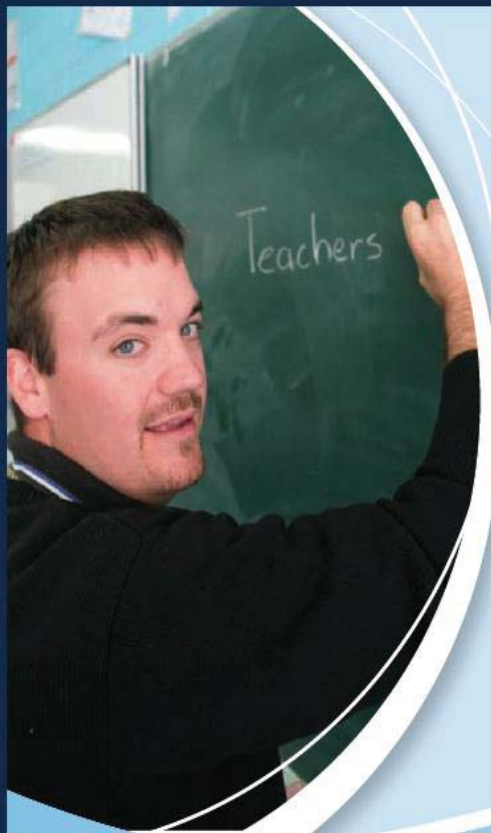
17. What do you think about the quality of the professional learning experience that you have had in the Teacher Residency Program overall? Why?

18. Is there anything you think need to change in the Teacher Residency Program to improve your experience of learning to teach? If yes, please explain.

Thank you for completing this survey!

Appendix G: Western Australian Professional Standards for Teaching

Western Australian Professional Standards for Teaching



These standards are a record of the specialised knowledge, practices and understandings to which Western Australian teachers are committed in the interests of upholding the profession and promoting student learning.

Professional Standards



Western Australian
College of Teaching



The Western Australian Professional Standards for Teaching have been developed by the College in consultation with Western Australian teachers. Professional standards provide a common reference point for describing, clarifying, celebrating and supporting the complex and varied nature of the work of teachers. They enable members of the Western Australian College of Teaching to demonstrate the level of their professionalism to students, parents and the wider community.

In 2003, all Australian states and territories, through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), agreed to a professional standards framework. This national framework provides a basis for expectations of teacher performance in Australia. MCEETYA agreed the National Standards Framework would provide a powerful mechanism for enhancing the status of teaching and standing of teachers, and a common reference point for engagement within the profession and the community.

The Western Australian Professional Standards for Teaching guide the achievement and maintenance of full registration of teachers in Western Australian schools. Standards codify the excellent practice of teachers and document their commitment to their students, their colleagues and their community.

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE	
STANDARD 1	1.1 Teachers know the learning capabilities of their students and are aware of the factors that influence their learning.
Students Teachers know, respect, and are responsive to the diverse needs of their students	1.2 Teachers acknowledge and respond to the social, cultural, historical and religious backgrounds of the students they teach and value their diversity.
	1.3 Teachers develop an understanding of students' skills, interests and prior achievements and the potential impacts of these factors on achieving appropriate learning outcomes.
	1.4 Teachers know and understand the use of appropriate assessment strategies to assist in planning student learning experiences.
STANDARD 2	2.1 Teachers know, understand and apply the fundamental ideas, core values, principles and structure of the approved Western Australian curriculum.
Curriculum Teachers know and teach relevant curriculum content and skills	2.2 Teachers have a sound and critical understanding of the curriculum content, processes and skills they teach and use this knowledge to meet student learning needs.
	2.3 Teachers have knowledge of, and understand the links between curriculum statements, policies, programs and materials associated with the content and the context in which they teach.
	2.4 Teachers have a knowledge of assessment appropriate to the curriculum and the students they teach.
STANDARD 3	3.1 Teachers draw on the body of knowledge about learning and on contemporary research into learning and teaching to support their practice.
Learning and Teaching Teachers know how their students learn and how to teach them effectively	3.2 Teachers know and use the methodologies, resources and technologies which support learning of the content, processes and skills they teach.
	3.3 Teachers know and use their understanding of the stages of students' physical, social and intellectual development in their teaching.
	3.4 Teachers know how learning environments, program design, use of materials and resources, assessment and structure of activities impact on learning.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE	
STANDARD 4 Teaching Practice Teachers use a range of teaching practices and resources to engage students in effective learning	4.1 Teachers establish and develop learning experiences that challenge students in the pursuit of personal excellence, and make connections with students' own life experiences, knowledge, skills and values. 4.2 Teachers provide and develop learning opportunities based on evaluation of learning, and reflection on the effectiveness of their teaching. 4.3 Teachers use a range of resources, strategies and technologies to enhance student learning. 4.4 Teachers provide learning opportunities and experiences that encourage students to be actively engaged and reflective in the learning process. 4.5 Teachers provide opportunities for individual and collaborative learning to enable students to become independent learners.
STANDARD 5 Learning Environment Teachers create and maintain a safe, challenging and supportive learning environment	5.1 Teachers establish an environment that gives students an opportunity to learn with clear expectations of behaviours and learning goals. 5.2 Teachers encourage the pursuit of knowledge and student responsibility for learning through providing a challenging and engaging learning environment. 5.3 Teachers provide a learning environment that promotes respect for others and respect for self. 5.4 Teachers create a learning environment that caters for diversity and differences. 5.5 Teachers develop and support relationships that enable students to take risks in learning and have their well-being protected.
STANDARD 6 Planning and Assessing Teachers plan, implement, assess and report for effective learning	6.1 Teachers use their knowledge of students, curriculum content and pedagogy to establish clear, challenging and achievable goals for their students. 6.2 Teachers plan for the use of a range of activities, resources and materials to provide meaningful learning opportunities for their students. 6.3 Teachers use a range of appropriate assessment strategies to assess student learning and to inform their planning and teaching. 6.4 Teachers maintain effective and accurate records of student achievement to provide feedback to students, their family or carers, and the community.
PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT	
STANDARD 7 Professional Learning Teachers reflect on, critically evaluate and improve their professional knowledge and skills	7.1 Teachers regularly reflect critically on their professional knowledge, and teaching and learning practice to enhance student learning outcomes. 7.2 Teachers plan for and engage in professional learning activities as guided by professional standards for teaching. 7.3 Teachers critically reflect on the relevance of their own professional learning. 7.4 Teachers engage in discussion of contemporary educational issues and research to improve professional practice.
STANDARD 8 Professional Responsibilities Teachers act in an ethical and professional manner to uphold the integrity of the profession	8.1 Teachers promote the value of education, life-long learning and the profession of teachers in the school and the community. 8.2 Teachers have organisational, technological and administrative skills to manage their professional duties. 8.3 Teachers understand and fulfil their professional, legal and ethical responsibilities to students, colleagues and the community.
STANDARD 9 Effective Partnerships Teachers establish and maintain collaborative partnerships within the school and wider community	9.1 Teachers work with students, families, other professionals and the community to support effective learning. 9.2 Teachers seek and provide support while working cooperatively and collaboratively with colleagues and other professionals to improve knowledge and professional practice. 9.3 Teachers contribute to the development of school communities that support the learning, teaching and well-being of both students and colleagues.



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS



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College of Teaching

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Appendix H: Information Letter and Consent Form

Edith Cowan University



Information Letter

Dear Student,

A Study of Transformative Learning in a Preservice Teacher Residency Program

My name is... I am a PhD candidate in the School of Education at ... I am conducting a research project that aims to examine the impact of Edith Cowan University's Teacher Residency Program (TRP) on the initial professional learning experience of graduate preservice teachers. The TRP has been designed to provide an on-going two-day per week placement in school and a fulltime block placement in each of the two semesters of the TRP. On campus studies complement the school placement during the ongoing two-day per week placement. Employing triangulation of qualitative and quantitative research methods, this project is devised to identify what aspects of the concurrent school-based placement and on campus program contribute to, or impede the professional transformation of preservice teachers. The study involves case study analysis of the development of a group of Residents. I would like to invite you to take part in the project. Your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary.

What does participating in the research project involve?

Participating in the research project involves completing a survey about your professional learning experience at the end of Semester 1 and 2 along with other candidates in the TRP.

What if I wanted to change my initial decision?

If you decide to participate and then later change your mind, you are able to withdraw your participation at any time. All contributions you have made to the research will be destroyed unless explicitly agreed to by you. If the project has already been published at the time you decide to withdraw, your contribution that was used in reporting the project can't be removed from the publication.

There will be no consequences relating to any decision by you regarding your participation, other than those already described in this letter. Your decision made will not affect the relationship with your school or Edith Cowan University.

What will happen to the information I give?

Your privacy and confidentiality will be assured at all times. Information that identifies you will firstly be removed from the data collected. The data will then be stored securely in a locked cabinet in my office or in password protected computers accessible only to me. All the data will be stored until the completion of this study, after which these data will be destroyed. This will be achieved by shredding paper-based data and erasing electronic data including audio recordings.

Your privacy and confidentiality of the information disclosed by you will be assured at all times, except in circumstances where the researcher is legally required to disclose that information.

It is intended that the findings of this study will be presented in the researcher's PhD dissertation and other relevant research reports. Once it is completed, you can have access to them by contacting ECU.

What are the education benefits of this research for the school and school systems, and for me as a Resident?

You will have an enhanced university and school experience as you develop close professional relationships and reflect on your own professional experience. You will also gain deeper insights into learning to teach, and bettering understanding of how quality teachers are prepared.

Are there any risks associated with participation?

You may feel discomfort speaking about your experience in your professional work in school. Giving up time to participant in interviews may be considered as an inconvenience.

Will any measures be taken to prevent, minimize or manage the potential risks identified for this research project?

In order to prevent or minimize these potential risks, you will be informed, ahead of your participation and throughout the research, that you may withdraw from the research at any time without penalty and that your data may also be withdrawn at any time if you chose.

Is this research approved?

The research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of Edith Cowan University. The TRP has been approved by the Department of Education, Catholic Education Office, and selected independent Schools as a research project.

Who do I contact if I wish to discuss the project further?

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study with a member of the research team, please contact me on the number provided below. If you wish to speak with an independent person about the conduct of the project, please contact Research Ethics Officer of ... Ms. ... at or by email:....

How do I indicate my willingness to be involved?

If you have had all questions about the project answered to your satisfaction, and are willing to participate, please complete the Consent Form on the following page.

This information letter is for you to keep.

Yours Faithfully,

CONSENT FORM

I have read this document and understand the aims, procedures, and risks of this project, as described within it.

For any questions I may have had, I have taken up the invitation to ask those questions, and I am satisfied with the answers I received.

I am willing to become involved in the research project, as described.

I understand that participation in the project is entirely voluntary.

I am aware of the protection provided regarding confidentiality.

I understand that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time, without affecting the relationship with the research team or Edith Cowan University

I understand that finding for this research will be presented in a PhD thesis and other relevant research reports, provided that the participants or the school are not identified in any way.

Name of Student (printed):	
Signature:	
Date:	

Information Letter

Dear Student,

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What does participating in the research project involve?

Your participation will involve: 1) Interviews. I will conduct 4 interviews with you regarding your professional learning experience at the beginning of the TRP, the end of School Term 1, the middle of School Term 3 and the end of School Term 4. The interviews will be audio-recorded with your permission. 2) Survey. You will be invited to complete a survey about your professional learning experience at the end of the Semester 1 and 2 along with all other candidates in the TRP. 3) Provision of permission to collect copies of reports of your weekly meeting and three-way meeting with your Mentor Teacher and Site Director. These reports will provide additional information to the interview data and will be collected at the end of each term.

What if I wanted to change my initial decision?

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Name of Student (printed):	
Signature:	
Date:	